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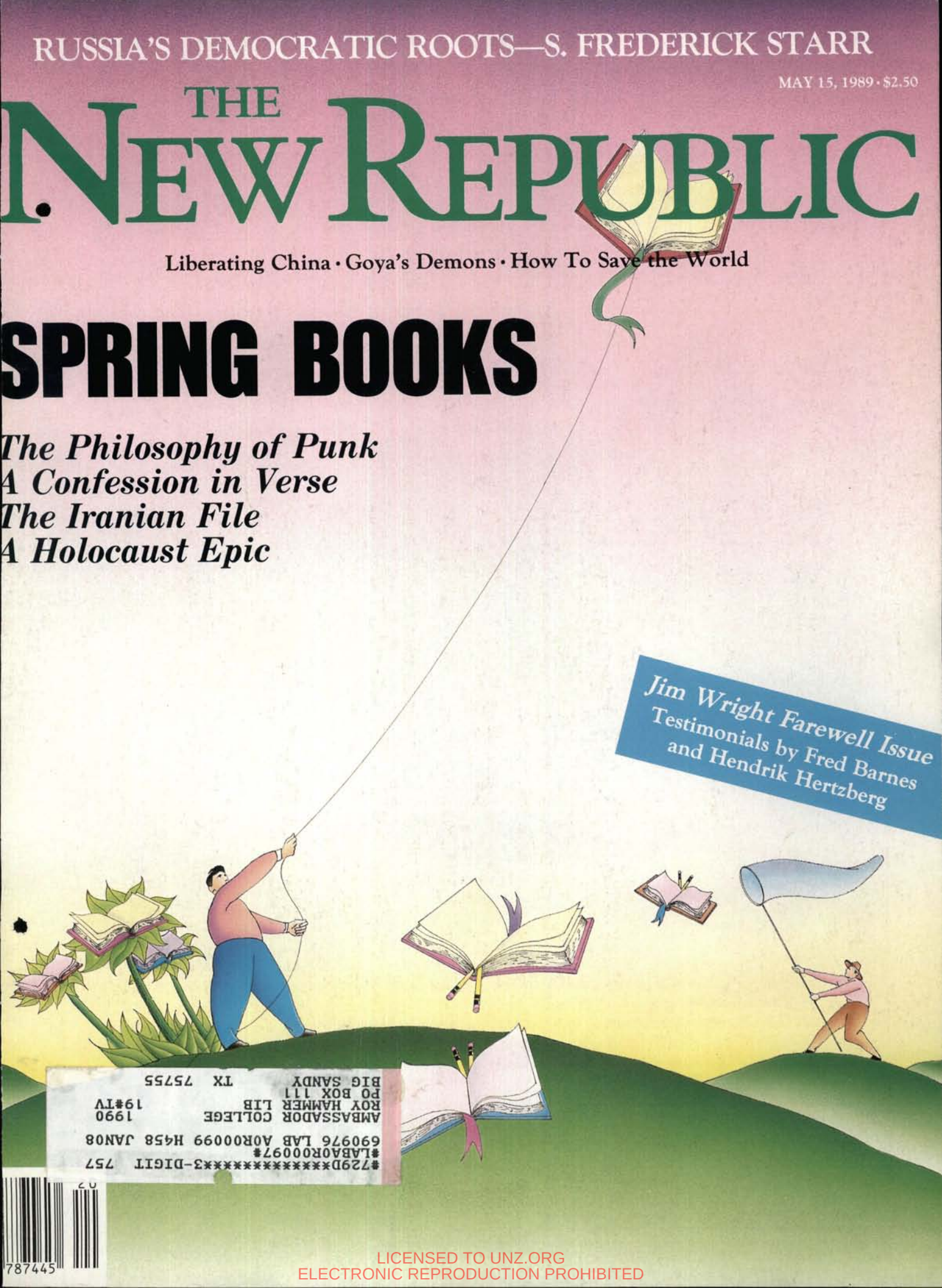

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A Weekly Journal of Opinion

MAY 15, 1989

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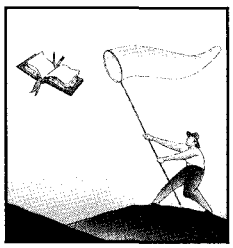

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FROM WASHINGTON

Wright, Writer

Remember the old light bulb joke about the Teamsters? The one that begins, "How many Teamsters does it take to screw in a light bulb?" In case you've forgotten the punch line, it goes:

"Ten. You got a problem with that, buddy?"

I kept thinking about that joke after I read in *Report of the Special Outside Counsel in the Matter of Speaker James C. Wright, Jr.*, a new book just out from the folks at the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, that the International Brotherhood of Teamsters had purchased 2,000 copies of *Reflections of a Public Man*, by Jim Wright.

I have no problem with that.

Nor do I have a problem with the 340 copies purchased by the National Association of Realtors, the 340 copies purchased by the Fertilizer Institute, the 170 copies purchased by the Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association, or the 1,680 copies purchased by the Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Association.

Reading is fundamental. Jim Wright knows this. One of the topics covered in *Reflections of a Public Man* is "On Reading and Writing." Wright writes:

> Perhaps you have discovered the joys of reading. I want to recommend them to you. They are far more satisfying, I assure you, than the passive joys of sitting in a chair and watching television.
>
> Now, I know some of you are thinking: Either I don't know how to read or that fellow doesn't know how to watch television!
>
> Please do not think that I disparage television or the movies. Of course they are enjoyable. And of course there are some things that you can learn from both.
>
> But a young chimpanzee can sit in a chair and watch television. He cannot read.

Another thing a young chimpanzee cannot do is buy a copy of *Reflections of a Public Man* in a bookstore. Neither can a human being. At Olsson's Books and Records, a well-stocked outlet in the neighborhood, the inventory computer lists 175 books by people named Wright and 34 with titles beginning *Reflections . . .*, but beyond that, no dice. And no wonder, given the nature of the financial arrangement between Jim Wright and the Madison Publishing Company. The cover price of *Reflections of a Public Man* is $5.95. Of that, Wright, as author, gets a "royalty" of 55 percent, or $3.25. Bookstores normally get 40 percent of a book's price. That would leave five percent, or 35 cents, for such incidentals as paper, printing, binding, promotion, and distribution. This may not be why *Reflections of a Public Man* is not only the first but also the last book ever published by the Madison Publishing Company, but it certainly explains the emphasis on alternative marketing strategies, such as bulk sales to lobbyists and other bibliophiles.

Reflections of a Public Man is the capital's most talked-about book since *The Satanic Verses*, but very few non-Teamsters have actually read it. I, however, have. I borrowed a copy from a friend who got it from a lobbyist.

The front cover of *Reflections of a Public Man* is entirely taken up by a photograph of Jim Wright. There's another photo on the back cover, showing him on horseback. The book has 117 pages. The type is quite large, and many pages have only a few lines on them. I calculate that the text contains about 18,000 words, about half as many as this magazine.

The text is not what I'd expected. I'd expected the sort of thing one normally gets in "books" "written" "by" congressional politicians—that is, a collection of op-eddish "policy" pieces obviously drafted by staff aides who, in turn, appear to be working from boilerplate provided by the Congressional Research Service. *Reflections of a Public Man*, thank God, has absolutely nothing to say about "policy." Although a staff aide spent 200 hours putting it together, according to *Report of the Special Outside Counsel*, there is no doubt that in it we are hearing the authentic, or at any rate the actual, voice of Jim Wright.

The 75 vignettes in the book have titles like "A Fourth Grader's View of P.T.A.," "This I Believe," "The Human Race," "A Covenant Nation," "Haym Salomon: A Patriot," "A Glass of Water—Part of the Universe," and (the book's one poem) "Thoughts on a Mexican Sunset." The longest piece is "Sam Houston, Unorthodox Hero," five-and-a-half pages. The shortest is "The System," which, in its entirety, reads as follows:

> THE SYSTEM
>
> What people really mean when they say "the system isn't working" is simply that they are not getting their way.

continued on page 49

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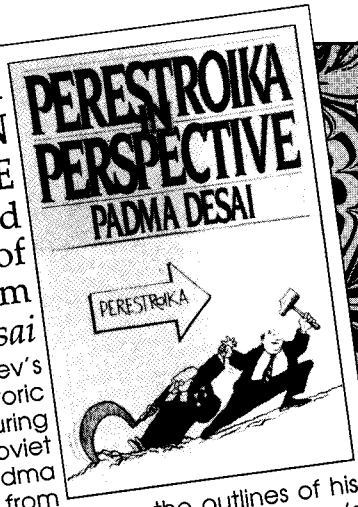
Padma Desai



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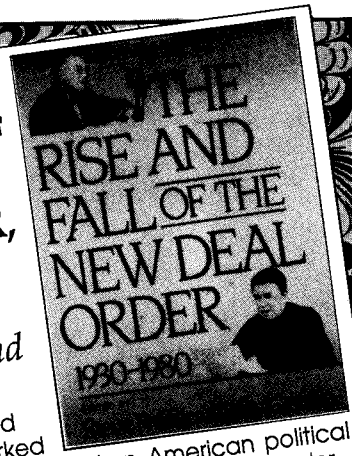

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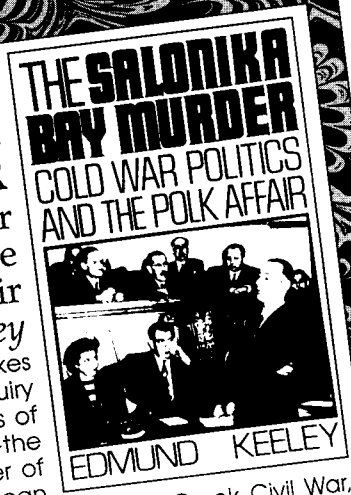
Edmund Keeley



Edmund Keeley makes a penetrating inquiry into the injustices of the "Polk affair"—the sensational murder of the zealous American journalist George Polk during the Greek Civil War, and the subsequent trial of a scapegoat in white-washed proceedings that involved Greek, American, and British government officials and journalists. Keeley shows how Cold War politics and Greek civil conflict led to the torture, forced confession, and conviction of a Salonika journalist. As the author evokes the tense atmosphere of the struggle between the Communists and the threatened Greek regime, he probes the international implications of a case that raises serious questions about American foreign policy then and now.

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World Champion Dodgers

To the editors:

The article "Tax Americana" (by Robert S. McIntyre, March 27) is incorrect in stating that IBM paid no federal income taxes in 1987 and would pay no future taxes under the administration's R&D expense allocation proposal. The facts are that IBM paid many millions of dollars in U.S. taxes in 1987, and based on our assessment of business growth and future sales, IBM fully expects to continue to pay federal taxes, with or without the administration proposal. Since 1980 IBM has paid billions of dollars in U.S. taxes. To characterize the company as a tax dodger is ridiculous and offensive.

The most serious distortion in the article is the claim that the administration's R&D provisions would reduce U.S. employment. In fact, the opposite is true. The author suggests a large percentage of U.S. R&D expenses should be deducted from foreign earnings regardless of where the research was conducted. This could have the perverse effect of encouraging a company to perform R&D abroad, where the cost could be deducted from foreign earnings. To encourage critically needed U.S. R&D and protect jobs, the administration proposal would allow a fairer allocation of U.S. R&D costs.

R. N. MATTSON
Assistant Treasurer, IBM
Armonk, New York

Robert S. McIntyre replies:

Oh, come on, Mr. Mattson. Try reading your company's latest annual report (page 47). There you'll find that rather than paying $3 billion in federal income taxes on its $7.4 billion in 1986-88 U.S. profits, as the official tax rates seemed to mandate, IBM says it got $310 million in tax *rebates* from the Treasury! Yes, it is "ridiculous and offensive."

The loophole that made this tax dodging possible, which the Bush administration wants to perpetuate, subsidizes only companies, such as IBM, that do R&D in the United States to support foreign manufacturing and sales. This may be an incentive to do R&D in the U.S., but it's clearly also an inducement to manufacture abroad. As my article noted, it's a lot easier to move manufacturing jobs overseas than to find highly skilled foreign engineers and scientists to fill R&D positions.

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None of the Above

To the editors:

Joshua Hammer's article about SAT preparation ("Cram Scam," April 24) could have been written in the 1950s by the test's sponsors. The Princeton Review is an SAT course. We teach kids how to get higher scores on the SAT. We do it better than anyone else, so lots of kids take our course. It appears that Hammer resents that allegedly dumber people can use our course to score well. If the SAT measured intelligence, we would not be able to raise scores (and women wouldn't score a standard deviation lower than men). If it measured knowledge of Shakespeare, we would teach Shakespeare, if only to help kids score better. But the SAT measures little more than testmanship, race, sex, and income. So some of our time is spent teaching things that may or may not make kids better college students, but surely raise their SAT scores.

Our commitment to disadvantaged students is not for show. Over the past three years, I have put almost half of our profits into the Princeton Review Foundation, which works with inner-city kids on a broad range of English and math skills. What exactly has ETS (or THE NEW REPUBLIC) done for these students?

The SAT is deeply flawed and hardly fair. The company that administers it, ETS, is largely unconcerned about students, rich or poor. Note that almost 70 percent of National Merit winners (these awards are based almost entirely on the PSAT, which is taken largely by students who have not yet prepped) are men, and almost none of these winners is black. We have been forthright in telling people about the test, and you just sit there taking cheap shots at our overstated wealth. Hammer never explains why every reformer should be poor.

JOHN KATZMAN
President, The Princeton Review
New York, New York

To the editors:

While it is difficult to argue with Joshua Hammer's criticism of John Katzman and his Princeton Review, it is equally difficult to agree with Hammer's defense of the SAT. As a college teacher for 20 years, I have become convinced that there is no discernible correlation between a student's SAT scores and that student's success in college. The SAT does, however, play a powerful role in education. It teaches that the only thing that is important is the right answer, as determined by a panel of testing experts, despite whatever thought processes might be involved in coming up with a

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
MAY 15, 1989

THE CHINA SYNDROME

What 1848 was to Western and Central Europe—a "springtime of nations" that saw widespread popular uprisings in the name of democracy—1989 may be for the Communist world. Four models of reform are being road tested in Communist countries, with varying emphasis on the relative roles of economic and political liberalization. Hungary is simultaneously trying *perestroika* and *glasnost*. The Soviet Union has given strong support to *glasnost*, creating nationalist unrest in the process, while *perestroika* is bogged down. China has persisted in *perestroika* (though promoting it less vigorously than before), and has stifled *glasnost*. The fourth model is "none of the above," the maintenance of rigid Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy in both economics and politics, as in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Cuba.

Europe wasn't ready for reform in 1848. Unrest was put down in the name of conservative orthodoxy—in Paris, ferociously. That may happen this year in the Communist world, too, if worried Party leaders in Moscow and Beijing start thinking that things are getting out of hand. The Soviets already have used mass arrests and even poison gas to suppress nationalists in Armenia and Georgia; next on their hit list may be Estonia or the Ukraine, and perhaps Poland or Hungary, if spring fever leads those countries to think they can opt out of the Warsaw Pact. And world public opinion may let them get away with some of this. Barring sustained violent repression, many Westerners who yearn for an end to the cold war may be willing to overlook a slowing of *glasnost* if it means speeding up *perestroika*. In other words, they'll say, Gorbachev is trying the Chinese model.

Recent events in China, however, raise questions about whether that model—*perestroika* without *glasnost*—works especially well. Undeniably, Chinese *perestroika*—decentralization of industrial management, the blossoming of commercial free enterprise, and decommunization of agriculture through the leasing of state land to peasants—easily outshines the present economic reform in the Soviet Union. While standards of living are slipping in the U.S.S.R., they have been dramatically improving in China. The per capita income of peasants tripled between 1978 and 1986, and doubled for urban workers; per capita living space doubled for both groups. Average life expectancy in China has gone from 54 years in 1965 to 69 years in 1986, while for males in the Soviet Union, it has fallen from 66 to 65.

Still, even Chinese *perestroika* is not true capitalism, and China's record pales next to that of neighbors that have placed their bet squarely on the free market. China's per capita GNP is $338 a year, compared with $9,800 in Hong Kong, $8,772 in Singapore, $3,577 in South Korea, $6,045 in Taiwan, and $1,045 in Thailand. True, China started out desperately poor, had no help from Britain or the United States, and has had to contend with the problems of overpopulation and rural backwardness. But doubtless life in China would be better had its people never been forced to conform to the political and economic ideas of Mao Zedong. Even now, they would surely appreciate less centralized economic control. Inflation—currently running at 30 percent—is a product of the deregulation of prices, but also of bureaucratic restraint on production.

The government is trying to fight inflation with austerity, and the combination is contributing to the country's current unrest. But an absence of *glasnost*, not *perestroika*, is what brought 150,000 angry students into Tienanmen Square on April 22 and is what threatens to unleash massive new protests—and perhaps, massive repression—on May 4, the 70th anniversary of China's most famous student-led protests. The student rallies this year are larger and better organized than the ones in 1986 and 1987 that ended with the forced resignation of Communist Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang, whose death on April 15 triggered the most recent protests. The students seem to have the support of some workers, and of leading intellectuals in and out of the country. Prior to the student protests, 50 such intellectuals signed a statement calling for an amnesty for political prisoners and removal of "the man-made obstacles to the free development of the economy."

Led by dissident astrophysicist Fang Lizhi, the intellectuals asserted that without democratic political reform, economic reform cannot succeed. "Because the outmoded political system has not been subjected to a true democratic reform in a timely manner, the positive results of the reform of the economic system are faced with the danger of being swallowed up by the specially privileged class. The unjust usurpation of political pow-

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er has led to an unjust distribution of wealth in society. The new social inequality has seriously impaired the people's enthusiasm for production."

What should the United States be doing about the situation in China? Fundamentally, it should treat China as it does the Soviet Union, or Hungary, or East Germany, nudging it no less toward democracy than toward capitalism. This is not the pattern of past U.S. policy, however. At least since Nixon went to China in 1972, a double standard has been in effect. China has been treated as a geopolitical ally in the cold war, and we've tended to go easy on the Chinese tendency to treat human rights as an optional accessory. Meanwhile, we've made human rights a key item on our agenda with the Soviet Union, partly to embarrass our adversary, partly to satisfy domestic constituencies, and partly to conform with our own racial stereotypes. The Chinese have been considered "culturally different," and human rights interventions by us have been deemed "inappropriate."

The policy has been changing—the United States has criticized excessive use of force by Chinese troops in Tibet, for example—but not fast enough. The time has come for the U.S. government to talk as plainly to China as it does to the U.S.S.R. For one thing, the China card isn't worth as much as it used to be. We are getting friendlier with the Soviet Union, and now Beijing and Moscow are also mending fences—even if they are not about to form an alliance against us.

Another reason for frankness about China's behavior is that China is fast becoming a power whose attitudes and policies have ramifications far beyond its borders. The Chinese have sold long-range missiles to Saudi Arabia and are reported to be considering the sale of medium-range missiles to Iraq, Iran, and Syria. The missiles, in each case, are likely to be fitted with chemical warheads. Closer to home, China also has a dismal record of support for Pol Pot in Cambodia; the Chinese acknowledge only that his regime "made mistakes" during its genocidal period in power. And China has a deplorable record of human rights abuses in Tibet and in its own territory. It has no free press, permits elections only at the lowest legislative level, and punishes dissidents with jailing and expulsion from employment.

When President Bush visited China in February, he did, to his credit, invite Fang to dinner. But the rest of his performance was not to his, or America's, credit. The Chinese forbade Fang entry, and complained bitterly to U.S. officials about the intrusion into their internal affairs. Bush said on the way out of the country that he "regretted" the Fang incident, but he did not take advantage of his visit to raise the issue of human rights with top Chinese officials, except to say in a toast that U.S.-Chinese relations must be based on "respect for the individual" as well as "the integrity of states."

Amid the current turmoil in China, administration spokesmen have been defending the universal right of citizens to protest and petition their government, but the United States has not said that it agrees with the students' demands. Some officials say they are afraid our intervention might cause Chinese leaders to lose

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face, and crack down even harder than they plan to, and for a longer time. We can calibrate our statements pragmatically—we have done so in the case of the Soviet Union, after all, allowing the news about repression in Georgia to speak for itself—but we must not forgo statements supporting democracy in China. Chances are that Gorbachev will not make such a statement when he visits China in May, either, but that he will be lionized anyway by students and other democrats. The United States should not allow *glasnost* to be a greater inspiration than real democracy.

NOTEBOOK

OPTING OUT: Stock options are fast becoming one of the surest ways for corporate executives to land a guest spot on "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous." The *Wall Street Journal* reports that Richard Gelb, chairman of Bristol-Myers, made up for his paltry $1.5 million salary in 1988 with a $12.6 million gain from the exercise of stock options that were part of his salary package. The article goes on to list several other similarly enriched captains of industry, and cites a report by Towers Perrin, a consulting company, that shows that the median gain from the exercise of stock options by chief executives rose by 40 percent last year. Corporate stock options didn't start out as a get-rich-quick scheme. By granting executives the right to buy a certain number of company shares at a set price sometime in the future, options were supposed to serve as an incentive for better performance over the long haul. But in the age of hostile takeovers, stock options reward short-term greed, not long-term dedication. As long as the stock goes up, you make money. And short of, say, selling assets or cutting back on R&D, what quicker way to boost your company's stock than to sell out to the highest bidder? From 1978 to 1988, the portion of chief executives' total compensation that came from stock options and other long-term incentives rose from 15 percent to 42 percent. During that same period, the capital gains tax rate was cut almost in half, making it more tempting to cash options in. Those two factors may not have started the takeover boom, but they haven't done much to stop it. If George Bush and corporate boards want executives to think about the next decade rather than the next quarter—like the Japanese or the Germans, who according to Towers Perrin don't provide their top executives with long-term incentives—they shouldn't be begging them to cash in their chips.

HYPOCRISY UPDATE: By a vote of 129-2, the U.N. General Assembly last week condemned Israel for violations of human rights. It also added to what is by now its biannual ritual a grab bag of charges relating to Israeli policy in the occupied territories during the *intifada*. Of the 159 member-state delegations, 22 didn't show up at all for the event. Liberia abstained. The United States and Israel voted no. Among the rest, many countries usually respectful of human rights duly voted for a resolution cynically submitted and pushed by countries that habitually abuse these rights. Of course, it's not merely the standards of these abusers to which we hold Israel. But then, Israel has far higher standards, in practice and in theory, for itself. Still, it may be instructive to recall only a few of the occasions, reported on the back pages of newspapers you may not yet have thrown out, in which members of the anti-Israel chorus have behaved far more brutally than Yitzhak Shamir's army. What comes to mind first are Israel's northern neighbors, Syria and Lebanon, whose governments are engaged in a vast ongoing fratricide in Beirut. Then there's Israel's eastern neighbor, Jordan. One day in one town last week it killed no fewer than eight protesters demonstrating against a mandated price increase for gasoline, cigarettes, and other items. In Pakistan, soldiers shot up a mob in one of the fracases over Salman Rushdie's heresy: many casualties, precise numbers uncertain. We don't mean to focus only on Muslim countries. Venezuela, a democracy of sorts, officially admitted to killing some 300 people challenging not the legitimacy of the government but higher prices. This massacre was met with a big yawn from the world—which was roughly the world's response to killings by Soviet troops in its rebellious republics. The Western media have not exactly been zealous in covering the encounters of armed Soviets with unarmed protesters in the Baltics, in Armenia, in Georgia, certainly not nearly as zealous as they have been on the West Bank. It now turns out that Soviet troops shot dead scores of demonstrators (anywhere from 20 to 200, depending on who's counting) on April 9 in Tbilisi, the Georgian capital. We owe to *Izvestia*, of all places, the news that those troops also used poison gas against ethnic demonstrators. Presumably, there is no international agreement restraining governments from poisoning their own people. But such governments are scarcely in a position to criticize Israel, on anything.

CHILL OUT: Following earlier assassinations of mayors and attacks on the homes of high-ranking military officers, left-wing death squads in El Salvador killed the country's attorney general with a car bomb and threw two bombs into the house of the vice president-elect, where seven children were sleeping. In response, the newly elected ARENA party seems to be threatening to revive its right-wing death squads. It is publishing the names of suspected Communists and talking about forming "community watch" committees to identify left-wing sympathizers. Nothing could make the left wing happier. U.S. Ambassador William Walker has rightly said that the Communist FMLN was trying to provoke the right and the army into brutality and "drag this place back to the violence of 1980," when civilian deaths averaged 800 a month. Now, they average 30. It's up to the right to stay cool under fire, and up to the Bush administration to keep it cool. If mayhem grows, the U.S. Congress before long will for-

continued on page 12

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get who provoked whom and the whole country will go down the chute.

CORRECTION: In the Cambridge Diarist (May 8), the original publication date of *How Russia Is Ruled* by Merle Fainsod was, through the miracle of modern typesetting, mistakenly given as 1973. The original edition of Fainsod's book was published in 1953.

BLACKBOARD JUNGLE:

Dropout Rate Unchanged, Despite More Spending

—*New York Times*, April 13

City School Dropout Rate Is Up

—*Newsday*, same day

(thanks to James Ledbetter, New York, New York)

LOCAL NEWS: For weeks now, TNR Associate Publisher Tom Hicks has been bounding around the office halls even more energetically than usual. At last, the cause of this behavior has become clear. On April 23, Tom's wife, Nancy, gave birth to Benjamin Kerr McCullough-Hicks, at 6 lbs. 5 ounces and standing a foot and a half. Congratulations, Tom, and welcome back to earth.

BLURB BLURRING: In both the May 1 and May 8 issues of TNR, an ad for Gregory A. Fossedal's *The Democratic Imperative*, published by New Republic Books, quoted Sidney Blumenthal of the *Washington Post* as follows: "Many consider Fossedal the most promising journalist of his generation." What Blumenthal had actually written, in a profile of Fossedal that appeared in the *Post* on November 22, 1985, was: "On the right, Fossedal is widely regarded as his generation's most promising journalist, propitiously placed at the heart of the nation's largest circulation newspaper." We apologize for the mistake.

Dan Quayle's new orbit.

ROCKET MAN

By Bruce Reed

Not long ago, George Bush sent his highest-ranking space adviser to the shuttle mission control center in Houston. Dan Quayle had more fun than a kid at space camp. He got to climb aboard a model of the shuttle, and try on a pair of "extravehicular activity gloves," and play around with veteran fliers. When an astronaut couldn't hear him through her space suit, he pointed to his mouth and said, "Read my lips."

Quayle hasn't been appointed head of the recently revived National Space Council because he knows a lot about space. He doesn't, and he doesn't pretend to. "As a matter of fact, I didn't understand it at all," he told NASA employees after the Houston briefing. "Only thing I know is that it looked good." But Quayle has a reason to do his homework: he thinks space policy is an area where he can make his mark. And it may be. In naming Quayle to his new post, Bush signed an executive order giving him free rein to review space policy. No one else in the administration has as broad a mandate, and there are no competitors for the spotlight in sight. The new NASA administrator, Rear Adm. Richard Truly, prefers a low profile; the president's science adviser, Dr. D. Allan Bromley, is an expert in nuclear physics, not space. Quayle could turn out to be right when he says he can have more impact on space policy than any vice president since Lyndon Johnson, who convinced John Kennedy to send America to the Moon.

But Quayle's no Lyndon Johnson. Where Johnson warned Kennedy that only the peaceful conquest of space could restore American prestige, and advised strongly against giving the military control of the space program, Quayle has spent a good part of his career trying to militarize space. He built his conservative reputation promoting the Strategic Defense Initiative, and he has helped defeat efforts to transfer SDI money to NASA. With Senator Pete Wilson, he saved the space-based interceptor program after Congress cut the SDI budget last fall. Quayle talks about weapons in space with the enthusiasm of a sci-fi buff who just saw *The Empire Strikes Back* for the third time. In the Senate, he once said the United States should develop anti-satellite weapons because we could not have prevailed without them in *Red Storm Rising*.

In view of all this, it may seem a little ironic that the Space Council that Quayle heads was designed largely to ease tension between the military and civilian space programs. The irony keeps growing. Quayle has already named two space hawks to run the council: Executive Director Mark Albrecht, who was Wilson's chief defense aide, and Lt. Col. Pete Warden ("Mr. Star Wars," to some) of the U.S. Space Command in Colorado Springs, who was Lt. Gen. James Abrahamson's idea man when Abrahamson ran SDI.

Quayle seems to accept the militarization of outer space as more or less inevitable. In 1987, when he was instrumental in killing a Senate proposal to ban the testing of anti-satellite weapons (ASAT), he said: "I think eventually we will probably see agreements to establish self-defense zones in space that will actually divide up space between the Soviet Union, the United States, and other nations. If others come within our zones, then in fact they would be infringing on our territory."

Drawing boundaries in space would be a little silly, since many satellites don't even stay stationary with respect to the Earth (and they're not likely to stop for

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customs). More important, though, carrying our territorial instincts into orbit misses the whole point of outer space. Space is ideally suited to serve as an international vantage point, from which nations can check up on one another—detect the deployment of troops, the launching of missiles, and, for that matter, the construction of suspicious-looking Libyan factories. This eavesdropping is by and large a wholesome thing; U.S. surveillance satellites discourage would-be aggressors from attacking, and our confidence in the satellites helps keep our nuclear trigger finger relaxed. The satellites of other nations are similarly stabilizing.

All of this points to a general principle that may sound too simple to be true but nonetheless is: it is in everyone's interest to keep outer space free from the threat of anti-satellite weapons. Doing so will not be a simple matter, but if we don't start trying now, before long it will be impossible. (In fact, a treaty preventing the deployment of anti-satellite weapons is arguably a good idea even if Bush isn't ready to put SDI on the table. The ABM Treaty prohibits space-based tests against missiles, but it doesn't protect satellites, which are the eyes and ears of any defense, on Earth or in orbit.)

Space treaties are usually hard to verify, but a ban on ASAT testing would be verifiable and a relief to all concerned. The Soviets haven't tested their version of ASAT (a killer satellite that sidles up to its target and explodes) since 1982; the United States developed an ASAT (a fighter-launched missile), tested it, abandoned it, and has yet to win permission from Congress to develop another. The present pause in the action is a good time to consolidate the freeze in the evolution of anti-satellite technology. But don't hold your breath. This is not likely to be high on Dan Quayle's agenda.

Quayle has asked for a major review of space policy, which is not exactly what Congress had in mind when it gave the Space Council a $150,000 budget and a tiny staff on loan from other agencies. He may have trouble finding anyone who hasn't reviewed the problem already. A half-dozen high-level commissions have looked at the space program since 1986, and have come to the same general conclusion: America will languish in space unless the president sets forth definite goals sometime soon.

But it's hard to put forth a bold vision when you have to look at the price tags. The nation with the most ambitious plans for space exploration, the Soviet Union, has just suspended its manned program to save money. In the United States, according to a recent report by the National Academy of Sciences, NASA's current budget will barely cover the shuttle and existing research programs. Quayle thinks we can get around a budget shortfall by unleashing the private sector, even though efforts to privatize the space station and Landsat have failed miserably. He wants the Space Council to help American launch companies get whatever subsidies and trade barriers they need. But protectionism and under-the-table government financing, no less than straightforward government spending, take a toll on the nation's economic health. Ultimately the space budget has to be prudent.

Among the big items on the menu of space options are the space station, a new shuttle, and manned missions to the Moon and Mars. But the Moon's been done, and prospects for the much-discussed joint U.S.-Soviet mission to Mars have dimmed now that the U.S.S.R.'s two unmanned spaceships to Mars have quit phoning home. Besides, without a massive infusion of funds, NASA may not be able to afford more than one long-term initiative. If that's the case, there's no question what Bush should call for. The most compelling project in the works at NASA is Mission to Planet Earth, an ambitious plan to study the world environment from space. Instruments aboard space platforms will put the Earth under a microscope, allowing scientists to track global change and environmental destruction, from the loss of rainforest in Brazil to dead fish floating in Boston Harbor. With Americans beginning to doubt Bush's professed environmental convictions, he couldn't ask for a smarter, bolder stroke: to pledge that America's mission in space in the 1990s will be environmental defense, not armed combat.

And who knows? Maybe the vice president can help push things in that direction. He passed his first test in March by saving two Landsat satellites that monitor natural resources, crops, and the environment. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration was planning to abandon the billion-dollar satellites because it didn't have $9.4 million to run them. That would have left the United States without essential photographs of the Earth for at least two years. Quayle came up with the money to keep Landsat going a few more months. That's a start.

BRUCE REED is a speechwriter for Senator Al Gore.

Democrats will miss him when he's gone.

THE WRIGHT STUFF

By Fred Barnes

Jim Wright is odd. He's finicky about having his picture taken. He likes to situate himself just right so he'll be photographed at a good angle. He practices transcendental meditation, according to his wife, Betty. ("You really have to raise your consciousness to a higher spiritual level," she told the *New York Times*.) In public, Wright is awkward and unattractive. His eyebrows dance, his smile is breathtakingly insincere, his style of speaking comes off as unctuous. The adjective most often used to describe him (and not only by critics) is "oily." Conservative columnist M. Stanton Evans says that Wright's political philosophy is this: "You can fool some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the time, and that's good enough."

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There's something even more odd about Wright. For all his peculiarities, he's the most effective House Speaker of modern times. He's got a firmer grasp of the subject matter of legislation than Sam Rayburn, who was a master of legislative detail. He's smarter than Carl Albert, who'd been a Rhodes scholar. He's bolder and more combative than Tip O'Neill. And while O'Neill may be more liberal, Wright produced more liberal legislation and thwarted more conservative policies than O'Neill ever dreamed of. "If I were a hard-core liberal and all I cared about were results, I'd be delighted with Wright," says Representative Mickey Edwards of Oklahoma, a Republican.

Edwards understates Wright's achievement. My bet is that liberals will one day look back at 1987 and 1988 as a golden age (a brief one, I admit). Ronald Reagan had pushed them around for six years. O'Neill made himself popular as a liberal foil for Reagan, but his record was abysmal. Reagan cut taxes, slowed domestic spending, dramatically increased Pentagon spending, and funded *contra* military operations—all on O'Neill's watch. On Wright's, Reagan got nothing but liberal bills he didn't like (spending for the homeless, plant closing legislation, the Civil Rights Restoration Act, arms control amendments, etc.). True, Congress produced more liberal legislation in 1965 and 1966 than in '87 and '88, but that was in the wake of the Kennedy assassination, and there was a Democrat in the White House.

Wright slam-dunked Reagan, and he did it at an unlikely time. Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute says four factors were working against Wright: he faced (1) a lame-duck president who (2) was still combative with Congress, and he operated in a period of (3) divided government (Democratic Congress, GOP White House) and (4) deep and bitter partisan feelings on Capitol Hill. That should have led to inactivity, Ornstein says. But Wright took advantage of two changes in Washington. After 1986 Reagan didn't have a Republican Senate to rely on, and his administration was engulfed by Iranamok. Unlike O'Neill, who was a passive Speaker, Wright didn't wait for House committee chairmen to come up with an agenda. He imposed one. He wanted a trade bill, welfare reform, more spending on AIDS research, reparations for Japanese-Americans interned in World War II, and so on. He gave committees deadlines.

Wright was willing to take risks, none bigger than in reaching an accord in August 1987 with the White House on Nicaragua and the *contras*. Under the accord, Reagan agreed to try negotiating a peace settlement with Nicaragua and to put off a request for more military aid to the *contras*. Reagan aides thought they'd trapped Wright: diplomacy would get nowhere, and Wright would ultimately have to support more arms for the *contras* as the only option left. Democratic liberals thought Wright had been trapped too. "He took on the whole liberal wing of the party," says Tony Coelho, the House Democratic whip. In meeting after meeting among Democratic leaders, Wright was criticized and shouted at.

Finally House leaders deputized Coelho to confer with Wright one-on-one and talk him out of any com-

NORTHWEST

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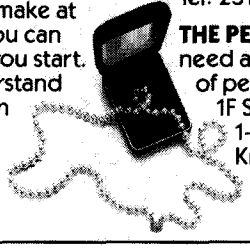

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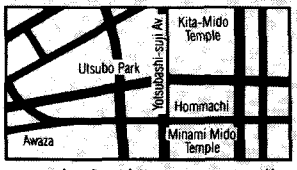

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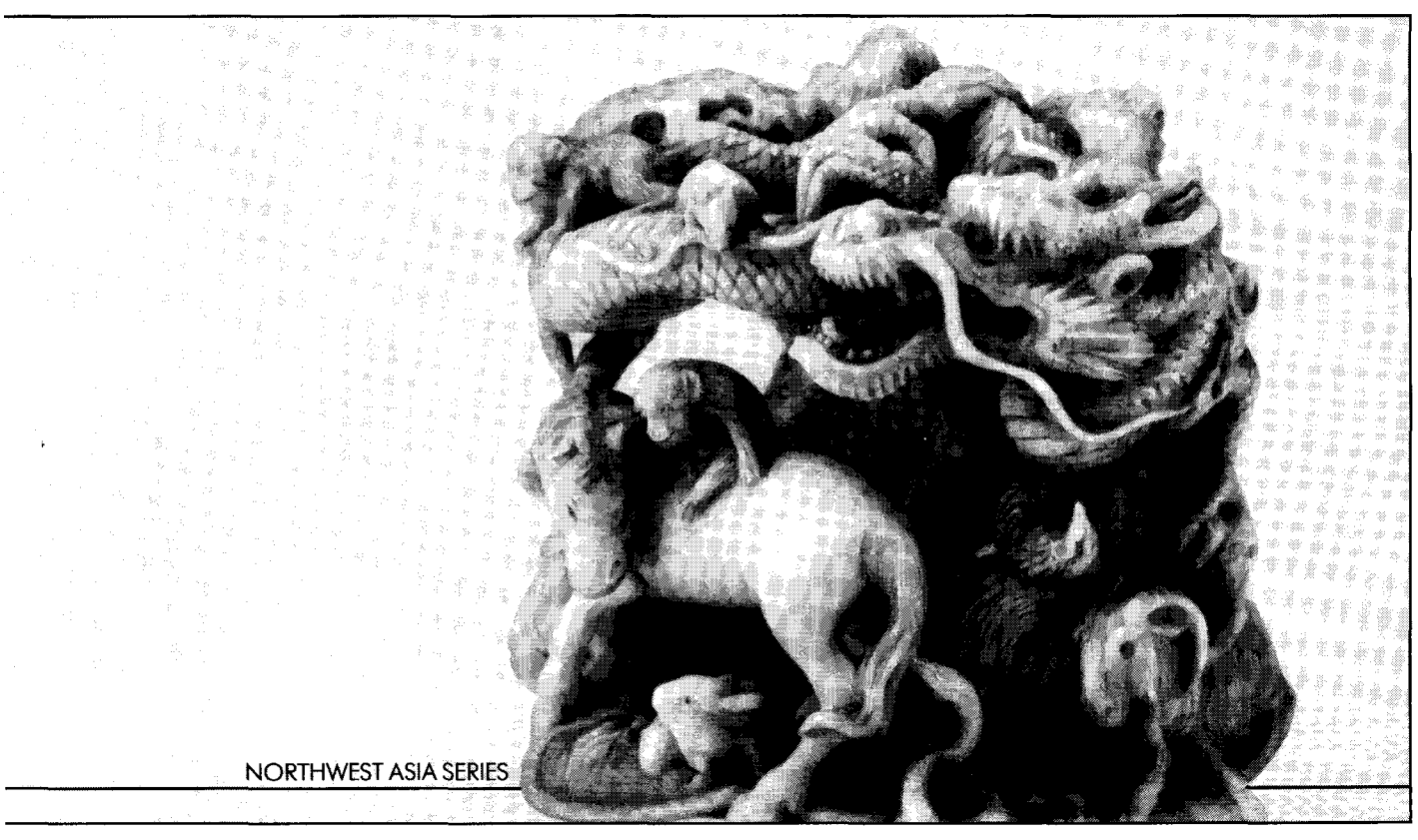
promise with Reagan. Wright wouldn't budge. He put a high moral gloss on his position. "Tony," Wright said, "you admit we need to stop the killing in Central America, don't you?" Coelho was not persuaded. He told Wright that he could lose his speakership by going ahead with the deal. Two days after the Wright-Reagan agreement was announced, Wright was vindicated. The five Central American presidents, meeting in Guatemala City, were spurred by the deal in Washington to reach one of their own. They called for a peace process to settle all disputes in Central America. They rejected the idea of more aid to the *contras*. Wright had a diplomatic option to cling to.

House liberals wanted not just to end the fighting in Nicaragua but to finish off the *contras* as a military force to be reckoned with, and Wright managed this in February 1988. He kept Democrats united; liberals and moderates voted together against military aid. Wright, says Edwards, "did more to undo the Reagan policy in Central America than Tip O'Neill ever did." That's not all. Wright produced one of the ironies of the Reagan era. As strong as Reagan was, Congress gained power and the White House lost it during his presidency. Wright cemented the shift of power with a new deal on Nicaragua, this one with the Bush administration last March. He and Senate Democrats agreed to keep the *contras* alive in Honduras, so long as they didn't attack Nicaragua and they received no military aid. Wright got a further safeguard for House liberals. He held out for a provision that requires Bush to get the approval of four House and Senate committees to continue non-military support of the *contras* after November. (This is the provision that drove White House counsel Boyden Gray nuts.) Senate Democrats were ready to accept an agreement without this. But they don't call the foreign policy shots anymore for congressional Democrats. Wright hijacked the pre-eminent congressional role in foreign policy.

This is a triumph of sorts for liberalism, because liberals are a more potent force in the House than the Senate. And House liberals have thrown their weight around on arms control as well as on Central America. The House doesn't have an institutional role in arms control; it doesn't ratify treaties. But in 1987 Wright decided it would play one. He and other Democratic leaders pressed the Appropriations Committee to add arms control limitations to Pentagon spending bills. It attached four in 1987, including insistence on the missile sublimits of the SALT II pact and a strict interpretation of the ABM Treaty. Reagan grudgingly swallowed these. In 1988 he had to accept them again, along with a requirement that the Defense Department prepare for a ban on nuclear tests. GOP Representative Vin Weber of Minnesota says Wright trampled on presidential prerogatives in foreign policy. If he did, he got away with it.

The price of Wright's success was high. He generated extraordinary hostility among Republicans. GOP leader Bob Michel is slow to anger, but he sputters in rage about Wright in Republican strategy meetings. (He got along fine with O'Neill.) Dick Cheney, deputy Republican leader until he became defense secretary in March, rarely uses strong language. But he denounced Wright



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as high-handed and untrustworthy in an article in *Public Opinion* last winter. In 1988 Wright promised Republicans a vote on Michel's package of non-lethal aid to the *contras*, then reneged. "The speaker went back on his word," wrote Cheney.

Wright's problem is that he can't stand to lose. Under him, restrictions on floor amendments have become more frequent. This is galling to Republicans, who regard the limits as repressive. Wright outsmarted himself with a clever victory in October 1987, ten days after the stock market crash. He scheduled a vote on an omnibus budget-reconciliation bill brimming with pork barrel projects for House Democrats. It also included a pay raise for Congress and welfare reform legislation. Floor amendments were prohibited.

To Wright's surprise, the bill was defeated. Michel then pleaded with Wright to drop the matter while Democratic and Republican leaders negotiated with the White House on a budget compromise. Wright spurned this advice. He impulsively brought up the same bill, only without welfare reform. To do this, he had to adjourn the House and reconvene it minutes later, creating a new "legislative day." Even then, the bill was a vote short. He extended the voting period until a malleable Democrat switched his vote. "It is hard to see what the speaker achieved with this legerdemain," Cheney wrote. Actually, it's easy. He achieved permanent Republican animosity.

Democrats are lucky. They benefited enormously from Wright's no-holds-barred style. He gave them two wonderful years. And now they won't have to pay the consequences. My assumption is that Wright's ethics violations will force him to step down as Speaker. The most widely respected man in the House will replace him—Tom Foley. Wright was perfect for trumping Reagan. Foley fits nicely with the Bush era. He's cautious, conciliatory, reasonably bipartisan, and adept with the press. Bush likes him. He's trusted by Republicans. And he's not odd at all.

POSTCARD PARIS

L'ÉDIFICE, C'EST MOI

By Antony J. Blinken

In the French press these days, the words "Chinese-American" almost unfailingly precede the architect I. M. Pei's name. A Parisian friend sees in this qualifier an expression of France's ambivalent attitude toward all things American. As the man responsible for the Pyramide du Louvre, a giant skylight of glass and metal that now occupies the center of the museum's main courtyard, Pei has put an indelible "Made in the USA" stamp on France's foremost cultural symbol. Calling Pei a "*Chinese*-American" softens the blow of American cultural imperialism.

At the pyramid's official unveiling a few weeks ago, Pei escorted French president François Mitterrand and Culture Minister Jack Lang on a tour of the new Louvre. Listening intently to Pei's comments, Mitterrand moved slowly through the hallways, savoring what amounted to a victory tour. Seven years in the building, the pyramid has caused the president a political migraine from day one. Opponents on the right decried the billion-dollar cost, the design, and, under their breath, the architect's lack of a French birth certificate. The Finance Ministry, housed within the museum's walls, expressed outrage at its planned eviction and exile to eastern Paris. Others accused Mitterrand of suffering from the same edifice complex that has afflicted previous French leaders.

Ironically, given all the fuss, the pyramid is merely the dramatic entryway to a vast underground network of galleries that has nearly doubled the museum's exhibition space. Seen from below, Pei's controversial design makes common and aesthetic sense. The central pyramid, flanked by two smaller replicas, soaks in natural light, which illuminates the off-white travertine stone of the basement. Most spectacularly, Pei has integrated into his subterranean layout the walls of a 13th-century fortress, unexpectedly uncovered during excavations. An informal survey on opening day found few remaining critics of the project. Everyone agreed that the Louvre, once a maze of endless hallways leading everywhere but where you wanted to go, had become a pleasure to navigate. As thousands of visitors excitedly inspected a Chinese-American's handiwork, an allegedly discordant note of modernism suddenly seemed in perfect harmony with its classic surroundings.

Mitterrand has the look of a man who believes the history books will be kind to him. On the surface, such serenity seems misplaced. The last six months have seen a wave of strikes by transportation workers, postal employees, and teachers in response to a wage-restraint policy, an insider-trading scandal in which one of his closest confidants was implicated, and the Socialist government's only moderately successful efforts to jump-start a sluggish economy. And yet, nearly a year into his second seven-year term, the president appears more self-assured and relaxed than at any time since his first inaugural.

The answer to this minor enigma lies in the fact that Mitterrand *will* get positive reviews in the textbooks of the 21st century. Simply put, he has torn down an ideological wall that separated his countrymen and built a political structure able to accommodate ever larger segments of the electorate.

A decade ago, French voters divided neatly into four quarters: one for the Gaullist right, one for the center right, one for the Socialists, and one for the Communists. In the 1981 presidential election, Mitterrand eked out the narrowest of victories over centrist incumbent Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. And then, a surprise: after a brief dalliance with the hard-line socialism called for in his party's platform, Mitterrand abruptly changed course by instituting an economic austerity program. This he sugarcoated by preaching social solidarity, em-

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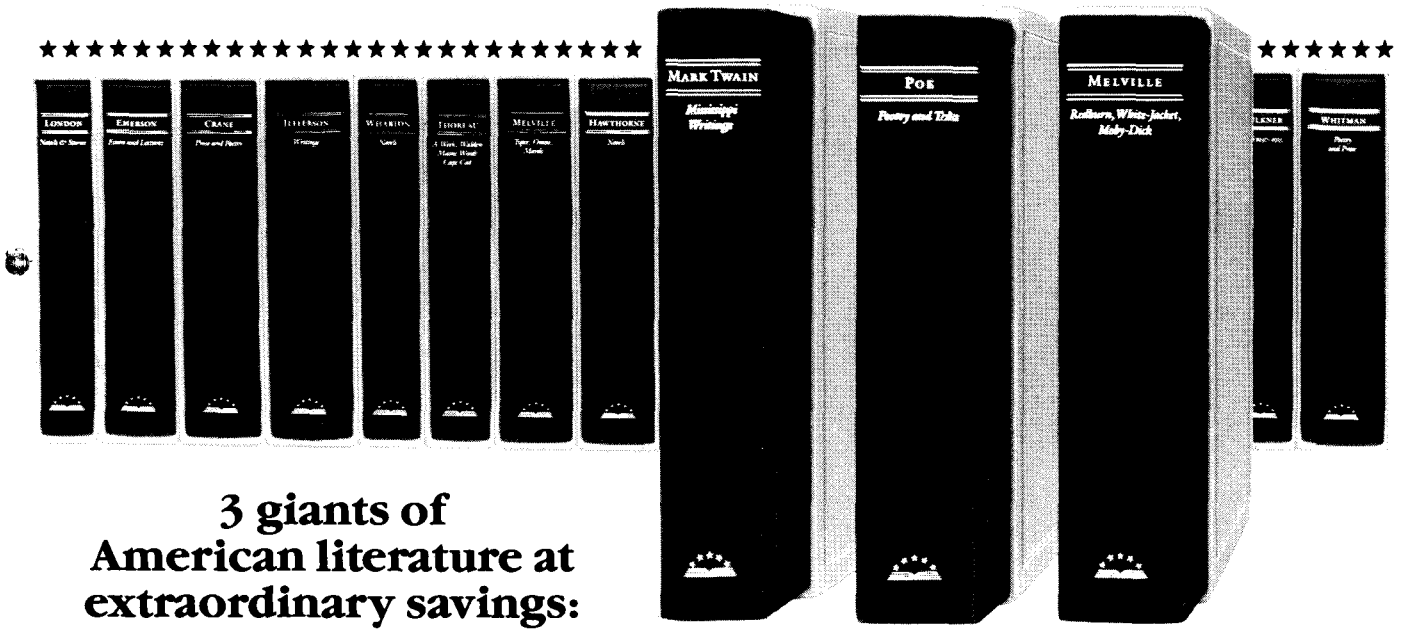

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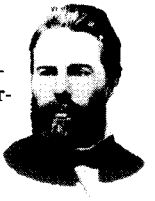

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phasizing civil liberties, and talking up the rosy future of a unified Europe. His decision to take Communists into his first Cabinet proved a masterstroke: unable to criticize a government to which they belonged, the Communists slowly became irrelevant until, by the mid-1980s, they were unable to take more than eight percent of the vote. As for the right, internal bickering among Giscard, Gaullist leader Jacques Chirac, and centrist Raymond Barre made for a house divided. Despite the right's brief resurgence in the 1986 legislative elections, Mitterrand easily beat Chirac in the 1988 presidential contest.

Pundits were quick to attribute Mitterrand's victory last May to a personal popularity that far surpassed that of his party. But this year, in late March, nationwide municipal elections saw the Socialist group pick up 21 cities (while the right dropped 17 town halls and the Communists 14) and confirm its position as the country's dominant political force. The result was a minor shock, since midterm elections typically weaken the incumbent national government. Instead, a final proof had been offered that Mitterrand has succeeded in realigning French politics. By co-opting Giscard's unfulfilled ambition to create a technocratic, non-ideological leadership that would govern by moderation, Mitterrand has transformed France into a nation of Social Democrats.

Although a full six years remain in Mitterrand's term, jockeying for the privilege of succeeding him has already begun. Among the Socialists, early favorites are Prime Minister Michel Rocard, an impish, energetic politician whose stock rose with the municipal election success, and former Prime Minister Laurent Fabius, a sober wunderkind who now heads the Socialist Party. On the right, a group of young parliamentarians and mayors is calling on the Chirac-Giscard duo to retire, the sooner the better. Michel Noir, a Gaullist just elected mayor of Lyons, the country's second-largest city, is the man to watch.

Mitterrand seems to view these ambitious youngsters with an air of bemused detachment. He's able to do what most politicians aspire to but never accomplish: transcend politics. While he still inspires the ire of a sizable chunk of the electorate, more than a majority think of him as "Grandpa." And he knows that years and years from now, when the politics of the moment are long forgotten, at least one of those pyramids he's built will still be standing.

ANTONY J. BLINKEN, a former TNR reporter-researcher, is a lawyer in New York.

A utopian scheme that a cynic can love.

WE AREN'T THE WORLD

By Zachary Citron

For the first time in many years, the United Nations is showing signs of working. Last year the world saw a cease-fire in the Persian Gulf, the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, and a deal between South Africa and Angola, all under U.N. auspices. The U.N. collected a Nobel Prize for its peacekeepers, lots of good press, and invitations for future engagements in Cambodia, the western Sahara, even Central America. But the more the U.N. takes on, the more obvious its weaknesses become. So far, the U.N.'s peacemaking role consists mainly of being there when the warring parties feel like calling it quits; it still can't push through a diplomatic settlement on its own initiative. And as recent events in Namibia show, it has trouble overseeing even those settlements that fall in its lap.

Perhaps more alarming is that the U.N. remains ill-equipped to do anything meaningful about the great threat of the 21st century: the proliferation of creepy military technologies among nations that can't be trusted to use them with restraint. The way things are going, it may not be long before chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, along with such convenient delivery systems as ballistic and cruise missiles, fill the stockpiles of Libya, Iraq, and Iran, not to mention some Asian powers of unproven maturity and an ever changing roster of dubious characters to our south. The trouble with the superficial success enjoyed by the U.N. lately is that it's dampened discussion of retooling the U.N. at a time when the need for an overhaul is pressing.

Mikhail Gorbachev, for one, seems to have already gotten the picture. For the past year and a half, U.N. headquarters has been flooded with proposals for making the U.N. Security Council the powerful body it was originally meant to be, and most of them have come on a Soviet letterhead. That would seem unfortunate, because traditionally (with good reason) the United States has regarded Soviet ideas with a suspicion directly proportional to the amount of idealistic rhetoric accompanying them. But this time it turns out that some of the ideas aren't bad. And this shouldn't surprise us, really: many of them are regurgitations of old ideas first proposed by the United States and other Western democracies. The Bush administration might take the opportunity to dust off the original proposals, formulate like-

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minded ideas of its own, and thereby kill three birds with one stone: restore credit where credit is due; make good on campaign promises regarding chemical weapons, world peace, etc.; and give the Washington press corps something to write about besides what a boring administration this is.

The most interesting of the reform proposals now floating around add up to an attempt to make the U.N. what it was originally supposed to be: a tool with which big, stable nations could push around little, unstable ones for the sake of world stability. This vision collapsed during the cold war, as the Security Council got mired in a game of dueling vetoes, and the General Assembly became a soapbox for world socialists and other cranks. Members of the assembly demanded a new economic order, a new information order, and various other redistribution schemes, while entertaining themselves with Orwellian word games, such as the 1975 resolution equating Zionism with racism.

But the winding down of the cold war, along with the ongoing decay of socialism, which underlies that winding down, raises the prospect of the U.N.'s picking up where it left off in the late 1940s. If the Communist world continues its erratic path toward enlightenment, it won't be long before the world's superpowers perceive that they have more to fear from the rest of the world than from each other. They may then also see that the U.N., for all its flaws, remains the mechanism best equipped for our acting on this insight. Turning it into a truly effective instrument, however daunting a task, is better than starting from scratch.

The architects of the U.N. made a valiant first try. The Security Council, the exclusive conference of five permanent members and ten rotating members, was a good idea, and giving the Big Five nations veto power was (and remains) a necessary concession to the insecurities of each. The Charter's authors were also wise to supplement the council with the General Assembly, the all-inclusive debating chamber that, by its very existence, shores up the Security Council's claim to speak for the world. At the same time, they were rightly careful not to give *too* much credence to that claim. Article 12 of the Charter states that "while the Security Council is exercising in respect of any dispute or situation the functions assigned to it in the present Charter, the General Assembly shall not make any recommendations with regard to that dispute or situation unless the Security Council so requests."

So far so good. But during the ensuing era of heightened mistrust between East and West, the U.N. built machinery for preventive diplomacy and military intervention that was so overloaded with safeguards as to be unworkable. The U.N. bureaucracy learned an unforgettable lesson a quarter century ago in the Congo, when the largest peacekeeping force in U.N. history got bogged down in an African civil war. Since then U.N. efforts have been less ambitious but often no more successful. In 1967 the Sinai peacekeeping force evaporated virtually overnight at the behest of Egypt's Nasser. One recurring problem is that U.N. troops aren't truly troops of the U.N. To this day in UNIFIL, the U.N. force in Lebanon, some contingents have such close ties to their national governments that they'll hardly leave the camp without their OK. One African contingent reportedly had orders not to fire its weapons—ever.

The U.N. Transition Assistance Group in Namibia has upheld the U.N.'s long tradition of impotence. Charged with keeping the peace during the run-up to independence for Namibia, UNTAG had less than a fifth of its force anywhere near southern Africa when guerrillas of the South West Africa People's Organization broke the U.N.-sponsored agreement. And most UNTAG personnel who were in place were stationed hundreds of miles from the fighting. Virtually unarmed, the U.N. had to fall back on South African "counterinsurgency forces," which were all too willing to bring SWAPO under control. Eventually, the truce was patched back together, but the U.N. came out of it tarnished, and probably weakened. One South African soldier observed to an American reporter, "What you have to realize is that UNTAG is not a force that has come here to fight."

That's one thing that needs to change: standing orders and other peacekeeping conventions designed to keep U.N. forces out of harm's way. Troops have historically spent far too much time in sidewalk cafés, and far too little at the site of likely incursions. Had the forces in Namibia found themselves face to face with SWAPO guerrillas, they would have had little choice but to stop them.

But ultimately there's no getting around the more difficult and profound question of how to motivate people to risk their lives—and occasionally lose them—for the U.N. One idea that's periodically raised, ridiculed, and shelved, but nonetheless isn't bad, is that the U.N. could maintain an elite, standing force. The very existence of such a force might deter SWAPO guerrillas, South African policemen, and others. As any old hand at the U.N. will tell you, a standing force would be expensive. That's why it should be small. It would be the first contingent dispatched, it would occupy the most dangerous territory, and in its devotion to keeping the peace—even if occasionally at the cost of bloodshed—it would serve as a model for the other, more conventional contingents. Old U.N. hands will also tell you that no country would volunteer troops it believed were very likely to see battle. That's why it would be wise to recruit the standing force individually.

The effective use of peacekeeping troops also requires an effective, unified command. As things stand, the secretary general haggles with permanent Security Council members and other countries contributing troops before dispatching the force, even after its dispatch has already been authorized by the Security Council collectively. And even after the troops are in place, he competes with the home government for their loyalties. The Security Council, somewhat like the U.S. Congress, should retain the power to "declare" peacekeeping ventures, but executing them should be left to the secretary general and staff. This means reversing the inroads into the secretary general's authority made over the last 20 years by an ascendant General Assembly, including the 1980 resolution sanctioning the practice of reserving certain fixed-term command posts for people from particular nations, regardless of their merits. The secre-

continued on page 22

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tary general, as commander in chief, could also be the focus for the standing force's sense of loyalty, an intangible factor crucial to success in the field.

Even with effective peacekeeping troops, the U.N. will still be falling short of its potential unless it changes its habit of arriving on the scene *after* the wars are fought and not before. One of the Soviet proposals for U.N. reform is to "use U.N. personnel to safeguard member-states from external interference by stationing them in one state's territory at the request and consent of that nation alone." As things stand, Libya could conspicuously prepare for another North African adventure (like its past adventures in Chad and Somalia), and the victim could beg for international help, but the Security Council would be paralyzed by the stipulation that it not intervene until invited by all parties to a conflict; it could sponsor talks (which wouldn't be very productive if only one side wanted to talk), but it couldn't send peacekeeping troops. That helps not just the Qaddafis of the world, but, sometimes, the Gorbachevs, who can claim to be peaceloving U.N. devotees even while arming the Qaddafis. If in a reformed U.N., Chad, say, requested defensive assistance against Libya, and the matter came to a Security Council vote, Gorbachev would either have to support the move, and thereby stop Qaddafi in his tracks, or veto it, and thereby clarify the world's picture of Soviet hypocrisy. Either way, it would be an improvement.

The morass in Cambodia provides a perfect example of a situation where U.N. peacekeeping, as it now stands, would be tragically inadequate. Representative Stephen Solarz, someone who has warned against a Khmer Rouge resurgence for years, has advocated that we put Cambodia under U.N. trusteeship, with peacekeepers and an administrator, and organize an election. It's a good idea, as many have noted, but this is the kind of operation only a revamped peacekeeping force, actually capable of keeping the peace, could undertake. It's too late (as the U.N. is presently constituted) to put together such a force in time for the anticipated Vietnamese withdrawal this fall. But there will undoubtedly be a next time in this troubled part of the world, and perhaps by then the U.N. will be ready to act.

Ideas for strengthening the U.N. never fail to incur the ridicule of seasoned observers of history and politics. They've seen it all before—the woolly-minded one-worldism that followed both world wars—and they assure you that it won't work. Besides, if it did work, it would be a bit scary: What's to stop an empowered U.N. from abusing its power? Quite simply, the veto. So long as the United States, France, Britain, China, and the Soviet Union each has the power to derail any use of peacekeeping troops, it will be hard to imagine their being used for any but the most undeniably worthy causes. Even if you can dream up a scenario in which a reformed U.N. might use a standing peacekeeping force to pick on a U.S. ally—and that's hard to do, since troops could never be sent where they weren't invited—the scenario is punctured by the fact that the council is never more than one American vote away from deadlock. And after the Reagan years, the United States can hardly be accused of being veto-shy.

Of the two criticisms leveled at U.N. reform, then, the one that holds more water is that reforms won't work. It may be that the elaborate checks on U.N. power will ultimately doom it to continued impotence. Given that prospect, why bother with the experiment? From the point of view of American self-interest, the answer has less to do with preventing wars in the Third World than with terrorism. The growing number of made-for terrorism technologies, and the general difficulty of keeping blueprints and chemical formulas from crossing international borders, make it imperative that monitoring and if possible constraining the flow and use of these technologies become a high priority of the civilized world.

The U.N. needs, first, an intelligence agency to keep the Security Council on top of developments like the Iraqi atom bomb project, Libya's chemical weapons, and India's experiments with long-range ballistic missiles. (Such an agency could also provide more old-fashioned intelligence; one reason UNTAG couldn't respond faster to SWAPO incursions is that it had no idea they were happening.) Like the standing force, the U.N. agency would be small, elite, and relatively inexpensive, relying heavily on member states. And it wouldn't include any U.N. spies skulking around stealing documents or otherwise violating the laws of nations. Rather, the world's top intelligence agencies, such as the CIA, the KGB, and the Mossad, would, whenever they felt like it, plug in information they've gathered. This voluntary sharing of information would turn out to be surprisingly comprehensive; in just about every case, it would be in *some* nation's interest to share the relevant information. (This is how the fairly effective International Atomic Energy Agency gets its data.) The U.N.'s intelligence agency could also get information from the IAEA and the comparable international chemical weapons agency that is now contemplated. But it would have wider scope for initiating intelligence activities—such as intensive investigation into a rumored chemical weapons plant—than either of these, as well as a direct line to the Security Council powers.

Ultimately, the U.N. will need the capacity to do something about the more alarming information it thus happens upon. If the world ever manages to formulate an effective chemical weapons nonproliferation treaty—one, say, that punishes violations with economic sanctions—then the U.N. can be the treaty's arbiter, formally deciding when sanctions are in order. And there may be cases when its role should be even more forceful. Israel did the world a favor in 1981 by pre-emptively bombing Iraq's would-be nuclear reactor, but the world can't always count on national heroism. The day may come when the U.N., at the behest of the Security Council, sends a cruise missile in the direction of, say, a Libyan nuclear weapons plant. And why not, if all Big Five nations know that such extraordinary action is in order, but none wants to undertake the mission alone?

On the less dramatic side, there are plenty of more boring reforms from which the U.N. would profit. One is administrative. The U.N. does much valuable work on such critical matters as health, population, agriculture, and the environment, but it wastes money on rampant

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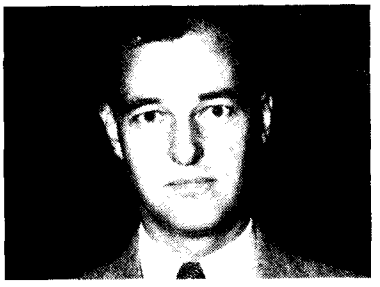

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duplication. The Economic and Social Council, UNCTAD (the conference of trade and development), and the second and third committees of the General Assembly mostly cover the same ground. Some or all of these should be eliminated, and real power vested in smaller, specialized boards. These would do less talking and more devising realistic strategies to deal with crises like natural disasters, threats to the global biosphere (although the U.N.'s Environmental Program already has an impressive triumph or two under its belt), even international narcotics trafficking.

At the moment, the debate on the U.N. in this country is stuck on whether and how the United States should pay up nearly a half billion dollars in arrears. The question should be refocused: What are we demanding in return for the money? The United States was the major mover behind the U.N.'s last major reforms, which rightly gave the biggest contributors more power over the budget. Those were enacted over two years ago, and at the time the U.S. ambassador, Vernon Walters, promised "the beginning, not the end, of a process of reforming and improving the United Nations in the interests of all its members."

That hasn't happened. Instead, Congress has just given a Commission on Improving the Effectiveness of the U.N. another 18 months to think about it all. And the most President Bush has said on the subject is that "the secretary general, an old friend of ours, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, is doing a good job, and he deserves our support." Pérez de Cuéllar does deserve our support, but just patting him on the back won't be very productive. Bush should aggressively take up Gorbachev's challenge to fix the U.N. The worst that can happen is that he'll wind up with conclusive evidence as to whether Gorbachev means what everyone's saying about the end of the cold war.

Russia's democratic roots.

A USABLE PAST

By S. Frederick Starr

"Scratch a Russian and you'll find a Tatar." In 1839 the Marquís de Custine used these dyspeptic words in dismissing all possibility of liberal reform in Russia. A two-month tour had left him convinced that Russia was a land of slaves ruled by knout-wielding bureaucrats. Only the hopelessly naive could imagine that its inhabitants could ever institute a reign of law, parliamentary government, and civic comity.

The view that Russia's political culture has been inhospitable to anything but brute autocracy (whether czarist or Communist) has long been shared by some very thoughtful American scholars all along the ideological spectrum. Among leftists, this view has sometimes been invoked as an implicit apology for authoritarian Soviet rule, and among right-wingers it has been used to fend off claims that the Soviet Union might gradually evolve toward a more open and pluralistic government and economy.

On the left, Leopold Haimson of Columbia University has argued that Russia's liberal movement collapsed before the revolutionary parties did because it was cut off from the masses, extremely narrow in its social base, and hopelessly fragmented. On the right, Richard Pipes of Harvard University emphasizes the "missing bourgeoisie" in Russian history, arguing that the late development of a propertied middle class and of ideas of civil rights and law left the field to radicals and reactionaries, which in turn led to the rise of state-sponsored terror. Similarly, James Billington claims in *The Icon and the Axe* that liberalism took root in Russia only in the 1890s; before that, nearly everyone looked on it with disdain. Constitutional liberalism was "more than any current of ideas in 19th-century Russia the work of college professors," he argues, and was "lost between the frozen Russia of Pobedonostsev and the flaming Russia of social revolution."

If this were the whole picture—if free elections, a free press, the rule of law, and individual economic initiative were truly so alien to Russia's essence as it has existed from Ivan the Terrible through Stalin and his heirs—then Mikhail Gorbachev would be in big trouble. In his efforts to build a more open society he could call on no usable past, invoke no cultural memories, tap no received skills or aspirations. Reform would be foredoomed. There would be little reason to think that the recent elections, and the cascade of other extraordinary events, were more than a flash in the pan. But Russia's heritage isn't so ill-suited to current needs. Russia and the peoples of the Soviet Union possess another tradition as well, a classically liberal heritage in many ways analogous to that of Western Europe and North America.

Always fragile, and dominant only briefly during the reform eras that followed the disastrous Crimean and Russo-Japanese wars, this "other Russia" nonetheless

S. FREDERICK STARR is president of Oberlin College.

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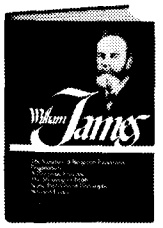

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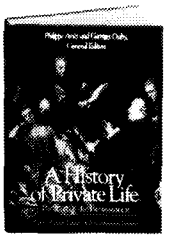

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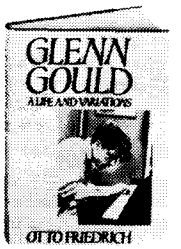

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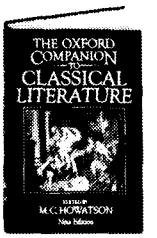

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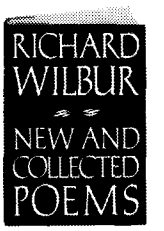

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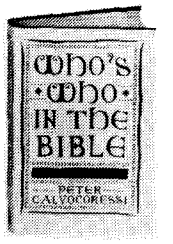

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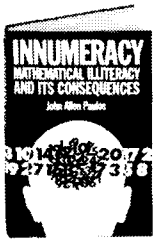

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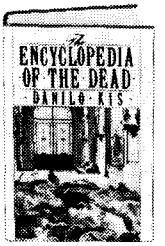

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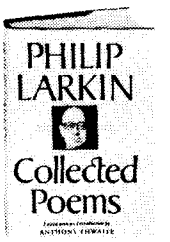

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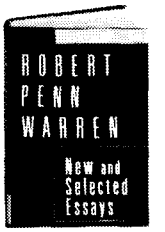

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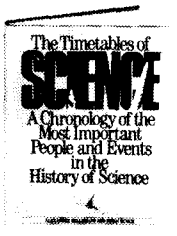

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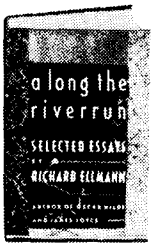

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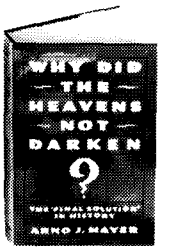

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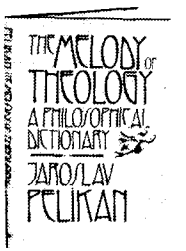

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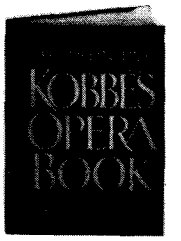

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has roots going back hundreds of years. For all its thinness, this strain, which affirms the role of law, civil rights, and private property, has proved so hardy that it has survived the most ruthless efforts to suppress it.

Peter the Great, who used Western technology to strengthen czarist autocracy, inadvertently prepared the soil for the "other Russia" by sending students abroad and by opening the country to contemporary ideas. By the end of the 18th century, Russia possessed the beginnings of an independent gentry and of an intelligentsia not subservient to the state. Under Catherine II, it also took the first steps toward building an independent sector in the economy and private institutions to promote social welfare.

Like Jefferson, Catherine II could quote Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws* from memory. Unlike Jefferson, she refused to take most of the steps necessary to create a society based on law. Nonetheless, educated Russians were intrigued by the vision of such a society. When the *Moscow News* in 1799 conducted a poll to determine the most significant figures of the waning century, George Washington and the American Founders headed the list. A generation later, the leaders of Russia's first revolution, the abortive Decembrist uprising of 1825, made their goals the abolition of serfdom, reform of the courts, a free press, the establishment of a constitutional monarchy with an elective legislature, and the creation of a federal system based on 13 states. Their rebellion was easily suppressed. But many of the ideas underlying it were perpetuated by young intellectuals in the bureaucracy, much as educated Russians kept alive ideas from the Khrushchev thaw during the somber Brezhnev years. The Decembrists' ideas burst to the surface after Russia's humiliation in the Crimean War and provided the impetus for the so-called Great Reforms of 1855-65.

That Russia peacefully abolished serfdom two years before Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation attests to the vitality of the reformist impulse. Czarist Russia created independent courts and a jury system, set up elective local councils (but not yet a parliament), and allowed the press a degree of *glasnost*. Like James Madison in the Federalist Papers, Russia's 19th-century reformers took a dim view of political parties but—as in the United States—political parties grew up anyway, as Terence Emmons has described in *The Formation of Political Parties and the First National Elections in Russia*. (And recent news about the formation of a reformist "bloc" in the newly elected Soviet Congress of People's Deputies suggests that Gorbachev, too, will have trouble if he tries to keep pluralism at bay.)

Viewers of late movies are familiar with the image of Russia under the last czar as a dying regime led by weaklings and challenged by irresolute reformers and wild-eyed revolutionaries. The truth is more interesting. Private industry and trade boomed in the two generations before the revolution. Investments flowed in from abroad, and Russian capitalists formed thousands of joint stock companies. It's true that there were many large syndicates with close ties to the government, but many small enterprises proliferated as well. Meanwhile, peasants rushed to gain full title to their land after 1906, creating for the first time a class of independent farmers.

The rise of a strong voluntary sector and private philanthropy showed the Russians' readiness to take social betterment into their own hands. Recent research by Adele Lindenmeyr of Villanova University shows that a staggering 4,801 philanthropic societies were created in the years 1906-09 alone. They operated in areas as diverse as health care, famine relief, and the arts. These are the direct forebears of similar "informals" that have proliferated in recent years.

To be sure, Russia's parliament, the Duma, was limited. But it went beyond Gorbachev's in allowing all seats to be filled by legal political parties, with none reserved for official organizations. The franchise was restricted, but so was America's at the time. Meanwhile, a flourishing Russian press approached general European standards in both freedom and range of coverage, and legal thinking developed sufficiently to attract to law school such bright young men as Vladimir Ulyanov (Lenin) and Alexander Kerensky (not to mention Tchaikovsky, Diaghilev, and Stravinsky). Calls for revolution abounded, of course, and legalized labor unions mounted strikes in increasing numbers before 1914. But Lenin was expressing a widespread view when he declared in 1916, "We'll not live to see the revolution."

The existence of a private sector in the economy and a serious liberal reform movement put the autocracy increasingly on the defensive. The czar's forces beat back every assault from radical revolutionaries until 1917, but they were far less successful in opposing liberal reformers and patriotic capitalists, to whom they made concession after concession, beginning with the Great Reforms. Together, these changes placed Russia squarely on the path that countries of Western and Central Europe had been moving along for centuries—a path leading toward a system based not on royal will but on law, with guaranteed rights against the state, institutional pluralism, and a mixed economy.

Obviously, Russia's direction differed from Britain's and America's, especially in its greater centralization and in the larger role in the economy reserved for government. In these respects it more closely resembled Prussia or France. But it is clear that Russia had moved far beyond the world of serfdom and the knout by World War I. The revolt that brought down czardom was engineered not by radical revolutionaries but by liberal reformers seeking a fully constitutional regime.

Why then was all this swept away by the Bolshevik coup? It is not enough simply to affirm that the old regime collapsed under the pressure of world war, or that Lenin seized power "from above," for this overlooks Bolshevism's appeal to millions who had suffered under the autocracy and had not benefited from the semiconstitutional regime. To this extent Bolshevism was a popular movement. Even so, Trotsky's Red Army had to wage a ruthless war that killed millions simply to maintain the Communists in power. And by the end of the Civil War, Lenin was forced to acknowledge that popular resistance—especially in the countryside—had stymied most of his plans, including the collectivization of agriculture. Notwithstanding Gorbachev's claims today, Lenin's New Economic Policy was less a principled

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compromise between Marxism and capitalism than a concession to necessity. Stalin realized this, and sacrificed the lives of millions to obviate the need for more such concessions.

Those who hold up Stalin's savagery as proof of the absence of any real counterforce to autocracy in Russia ignore one crucial point: however weak the civil society that had grown up in late imperial Russia may have been, to suppress it required greater force than any modern government had ever before used against its own people. No regime confident of its own legitimacy would have declared war on its own population as Stalin did and as Lenin had done until he was forced to back off.

Even after the sacrifice of millions of lives, the reformist values that had grown up before 1917 continued to haunt the Bolsheviks. After all, such views were enshrined in the works of many of Russia's finest writers from Pushkin through Turgenev and Chekhov. They were embodied in the rich juridical writing of people like Boris Chicherin, uncle of Lenin's foreign minister, and in the magisterial vision of Russian history created by Vasilii Kliuschevsky before 1917. Unable to obliterate such giants of Russian culture, the Bolsheviks reissued their writings while pathetically trying to explain away or delete their worst "errors." As a result, Russia's liberal tradition survived the darkest days of Stalinism.

Two years ago Gorbachev called on Soviet citizens to fill in the "blank spots" of their history. But Russians and other peoples of the U.S.S.R. had already been preoccupied with this task for a generation. Throughout the post-Stalin years, to be a cultural innovator was to forge links with Russia's past, including not only Orthodox Christianity and moderate populism but also the country's liberal and reformist heritage. Long before Gorbachev chose to allow publication of banned books, those same works were circulating from hand to hand among thousands, even millions. The process by which such books were unofficially disseminated forged independent, horizontal networks throughout Soviet society, breaking the monopoly of institutions created by Lenin and Stalin to control information. This process grew slowly, much the way someone who has suffered a stroke struggles to renew or replace blocked circuitry within the brain. But in the end the state's monopoly was broken.

Basic changes in Soviet society in the 1960s and 1970s greatly facilitated this process in both its economic and its political dimensions. Independent-minded entrepreneurs set up unsanctioned "businesses" in garden produce and service industries, spanning the country with a twilight "second economy." Operating on (or over) the edge of illegality, these guerrilla marketeers demonstrated that the Soviet public had huge unmet needs that could be satisfied most efficiently outside the state's economic bureaucracy. In the process they proved that Soviet rule had by no means obliterated entrepreneurial skills and initiative.

Politics underwent a parallel development. Unsanctioned, informal groups and networks sprang up in many fields. Tens of thousands were in existence by the mid-1980s, some founded only to provide voluntary services but others existing to influence public policy. The rise of such voluntary associations was greatly facilitated by technologies new to the U.S.S.R. Cassette tape recorders, home photo labs, private home telephones, VCRs, and private automobiles all promoted the horizontal communication essential for a civil society. Initially branded dissident or illegal, the voluntary associations moved swiftly to break the state's monopoly in field after field. Thus, in the very years when intellectuals were rediscovering and laying claim to the many forgotten streams of Russian reformism, other Soviet citizens were unconsciously putting such ideas into practice by creating a set of economic, social, and quasi-political institutions independent of state control.

All of this ferment began prior to Gorbachev's rise to power in 1985. He neither created it nor did much to encourage it, at least initially. Instead, he put his hopes in a campaign for worker discipline and sobriety. When this failed, Gorbachev faced a momentous choice. Either he could try to revive a stagnant economy and an alienated public through further applications of typical Bolshevik controls, or he could seek to draw to his side the new economic and social forces that had brought themselves to life through autonomous action and intellectual contact with Russia's long-suppressed tradition of liberal reform. He chose the latter course. He moved to co-opt the "second economy" (and tax its profits) with his new law allowing private—nominally cooperative—businesses. He recognized the voluntary associations when his then-KGB head Chebrikov acknowledged that they had a legitimate place in Soviet society. Gorbachev's genius is not to have created the elements of *perestroika* but to have taken them from the society around him and championed them with so much conviction as to lead many observers, especially those abroad, to think he had actually fashioned them.

The Soviet Union today is a society in turmoil. Nearly all the institutions created by Lenin and Stalin, including the Communist Party, remain intact, their formal powers undiminished. Tens of millions of Soviet citizens work for these institutions and know their personal fate is tied to the survival of the institutions. Many Russians, both within the government and outside it, look longingly to a romanticized communal past dominated by Orthodoxy and patriarchal institutions. Meanwhile, a very different institutional and social order has grown up in the midst of all this, giving rise to frontal conflict.

All parties are mobilizing their full resources for the battle. While the outcome is far from clear, those advocating the rule of law, civil rights, a free press, constitutional democracy, a working federal system, and an expanded private sector clearly dominate the public agenda. Of course, this has been easier because champions of the old agenda were discredited by a series of crises in both foreign and domestic policy. Nonetheless, the momentum of the social crusade at whose head Gorbachev has placed himself suggests that it has successfully tapped impulses that are deeply ingrained in the minds of many Soviet citizens. It would be an exaggeration to say that Gorbachev has scratched a Russian and found a classical liberal. But he certainly has found no Tatar. •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Affairs of Love

Poor D. H. Lawrence. The film world just won't leave him alone. If they aren't tackling his novels and stories—*Sons and Lovers*, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, *Kangaroo*, *The Virgin and the Gypsy*, "The Fox," "The Rocking-Horse Winner"—they're tackling his life, *The Priest of Love*. (Ian McKellen's performance of D. H. was as Laurentian as anything I've seen on screen.) Now Ken Russell, who made a previous foray with *Women in Love*, has adapted its predecessor, **The Rainbow** (Vestron).

Russell may feel a special kinship with Lawrence because his directing style is, to put it coolly, heated. Well, no one would charge Lawrence with taciturnity, but the difference between his prose and Russell's cinema is at least as wide as that between Balanchine and Busby Berkeley.

The Rainbow, photographed affectionately by Billy Williams, who did *Women in Love* and *Gandhi*, gains a good deal from the commonplaces of many English color films of the last 20 years—the charm of rural England earlier in the century, the lanes, the stiles, the tucked-away cottages, the rough good clothes of the men, the nostalgia of the women's dresses, the very things of the household.

Once again all these matters are pleasant. Russell's particular contribution—his best—is the casting and acting of most of the roles. Sammi Davis, who was visible but not memorable in *Hope and Glory*, plays Ursula. (It's the leading role because the film concentrates on the last third of the novel.) Davis gives the part spirit, fire, shades of hurt and wonder. Her rather blunt features suggest sensuality plus determination, and she plays in quick stabs and darts. If her voice develops wider range, she could become a major actress.

Amanda Donohoe plays the schoolmistress with whom Ursula has some lesbian doings before both pass on to heterosexual interests; Donohoe provides just the full-feeling yet no-nonsense air the woman needs. Glenda Jackson, who played Gudrun in *Women in Love*, here plays Gudrun and Ursula's mother with rustic reticence. Her husband, Christopher Gable, does well with perennial parental bad moves made with good intentions. David Hemmings, who was the puzzled young photographer in *Blow Up* in 1966, is Uncle Henry (changed from the novel's Uncle Tom), white-haired and florid, exuding jolly selfishness. Paul McGann, who was perfect as the I in *Withnail and I*, doesn't have quite the romantic flavor for Anton to set Ursula off.

The screenplay by Russell and Vivian Russell, however, is troublesome. Not because it condenses and rearranges somewhat—all screen adaptations must do that; but because Russell hasn't found an correlative in texture to suggest the quality of Lawrence's prose (which, for example, David Lean somewhat achieved with Forster's *A Passage to India*). To omit any attempt at this is to imply that a novel is nothing more than its narrative.

The lack of texture is never clearer than in the love-making scenes. First, Russell succumbs to—plunges into—the fallacy of explicit sex. How can McGann and Davis make love as Anton and Ursula? They can embrace and kiss as the two characters would, but after that? What is an actor reduced to, when kept on camera in the act of love, other than simulation—in a personal way that can have little to do with the character? Experience transformed by imagination and talent is the core of acting, but how much more than sheer experience can figure in such a scene? The acting, in any characterized sense, stops when the coupling starts and doesn't resume until it's over.

Second, which makes it worse, a novelist *can* give us characterized sex. Here, says Lawrence, is what Ursula feels as she makes love with Anton:

> The man, what was he?—a dark, powerful vibration that encompassed her. She passed away as on a dark wind, far, far away, into the pristine darkness of paradise, into the original immortality. She entered the dark fields of immortality.

Powerful as the film art is, rendering passages like that is not easily in its grasp. Davis's simulation, especially when Russell closes in on her face upside down, is only embarrassing.

American directors are indulging in autobiography. Blake Edwards made several films in recent years that reportedly derive from his life. Now Alan Pakula, a less interesting director, tries it in **See You in the Morning** (Warner Bros.).

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Chocolat. *A tacit, strong journey into memory. A young Frenchwoman revisits Cameroon where she grew up and notes the changes there by reliving some of the past. (Reviewed 4/17/89)* **Lawrence of Arabia**. *Possibly no one will ever again make a picture as large, in every sense, as this. A marvelous work. (2/20/89)* **Major League.** *Full of fictions but also full of fun. A baseball team revenges itself on its malevolent owner by winning. The final game really excites. (5/8/89)* **Little Vera**. *Surprising frankness—not so much about sex as about youthful malaise—in this well-done Soviet comedy-drama. Natalya Negoda is a completely winning Vera. (5/1/89)* **—SK**

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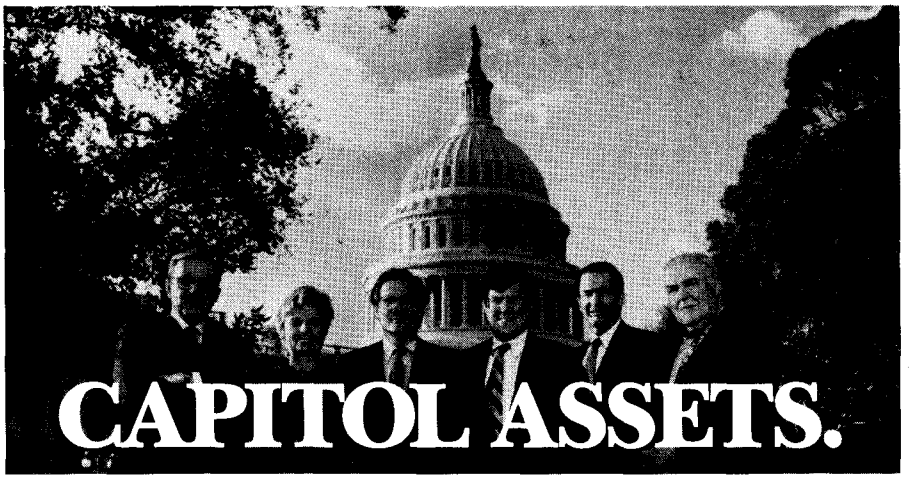
The first obtrusive fact that Pakula, like Edwards before him, doesn't fully appreciate is that he is rich. Hundreds of human tribulations are universal, but many of them can be approached or endured differently when one lives in, minimally, the seven-figure bracket. To see Pakula's characters going through their emotional ups and ups in an exquisitely decorated and furnished Manhattan brownstone ($5 million?), with occasional flights to a former relative's Maine estate ($3 million?), is to realize how much better it is to be cushioned when trouble strikes. More space to quarrel in, more time to devote to that and to reconciliations. No job worries even if, like Jeff Bridges here, you are a practicing psychiatrist. (A droll choice of profession by Pakula for "his" role.)

The greatest of the Western world's drama happens to royalty; its greatest high comedy happens to people far above money worries. Part of the reason that their lives involve us is precisely because they don't pretend to live as we do, only to share the limitations of mortality with us. So we can empathize as they quarrel with daughters about the number of their retainers or bicker over muffins in a large country house.

Pakula's people (like Edwards's) pretend to be just folks. This is off-putting. Still, it might not put us off so far if we could believe in them as people. Bridges says he is a psychiatrist and behaves like a college prankster on the make. Alice Krige, his second wife, the widow of a great musician and herself a photographer of note, supplies little but adolescent petulance and insecurity. Farrah Fawcett, Bridges's first wife, is supposed to be a successful model with a soul; we believe only one of these. Frances Sternhagen, as her mother, is the latest in a line of dying sages—the last was Burt Lancaster—mouthing copybook wisdom. Their friends talk of all of them in the diction of devotion that is standard in TV "true" drama. The four children who move through the story are also afflicted with "I love you" glibness. It's difficult even to believe in Krige's dog, who at first doesn't like her new husband, but then . . .

This story of divorce and remarriage is more like a complicated game played with human pieces than an account of the complexities of love. Over the whole film hovers the game player, an experienced filmmaker concentrating on the polish of his skills rather than on the truth of his characters or the depths of their difficulties. There is a kind of heartless, vain glitz shining over all the tears and embraces and partings and reconciliations.

So attention wanders, in us plebeians, to the luxe in which these people are seeking the bluebird of happiness. •



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In Boston and New York, a prettified Goya.

The Unliberal Imagination

BY JONATHAN BROWN

Among the artists of the past, none has greater immediacy than Goya. Nowadays hardly a year goes by without an exhibition, large or small, dedicated to some aspect of his art. In this decade there have been Goya exhibitions in Hamburg (1980), Frankfurt and London (1981), Martigny and Madrid (1982), Madrid and Dallas (1983), New York (1984), Brussels (1985), and Washington (1986). Add to this the endless stream of monographs and articles (not to speak of CBS Records' awful new *Goya, A Life in Song*, from a forthcoming musical based on the artist's life, which features Placido Domingo and Dionne Warwick), and Goya has a press that would be the envy of the hottest new creation of the New York art-consumption machine.

The secret of Goya's appeal is really no secret at all. Like all universal artists, his genius is ample enough to accommodate the shifts of taste and ideology that come with every new age. In an excellent study of Goya's critical fortunes, Nigel Glendinning has shown how the artist has traveled down the corridors of history in an ever changing succession of guises: Goya the Romantic, Goya the Populist, Goya the Surrealist, Goya the Marxist. Since the 1950s, still another Goya has been emerging from the seminars and the printrooms of the scholarly world. It is he who is introduced to the public in the ambitious exhibition "Goya and the Spirit of Enlightenment," which has been at the Prado and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and will make its final stop at the Metropolitan Museum of Art this month.

"Goya and the Spirit of Enlightenment" is an exhibition with a mission: to explain this complex artist first as a spokesman for the ideals of the Spanish Enlightenment and the Spanish liberalism that succeeded it, and then as the proponent of liberal ideology in general. The latter purpose is confirmed in the wording of the show's title, where Goya's name is coupled with the spirit of Enlightenment rather than with the spirit of *the* Enlightenment. The omission of the definite article obliterates the historical frame of reference. It ties the artist to what is regarded as a culminating human value: the exercise of reason as the means to ensure universal rights to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," to justice, to the equitable distribution of the fruits of labor. (It may be no coincidence that the idea for the show originated in Boston, that breeding ground for "L-word" politicians.)

There is no reason to doubt, let it be said at once, that Goya was affected by the proponents and the principles of the Spanish Enlightenment. But the premise of the exhibition, the choice and the interpretation of the works of art, reduces this extraordinarily rich and contradictory personality to a kind of inspired political pamphleteer, who devoted himself to working for the better world that was projected in the writings of the *ilustrados*, as the proponents of the Enlightenment in Spain are known. Goya had a streak of idealism. But he never let it gain the upper hand. Given the fickle, dangerous times in which he lived, given his enormous efforts to achieve success, Goya's cautious, calculating attitude toward revolutionary ideas is perfectly understandable.

Goya came into contact with some of the *ilustrados* in the 1780s, when he was struggling to establish himself at the court of Charles III, Spain's enlightened monarch. In 1775, when he was 29 years old, the artist started to work as a designer of tapestries at the royal tapestry factory, the first step in a slow ascent to the top of the hierarchy of court artists. Goya was as tenacious a social climber as ever there was; but he really did have a long way to go. His father was a gilder, a humble artisan working on the fringes of the tiny art world in provincial Zaragoza. From there to the position of first painter to the king of Spain was a tremendously long haul, as we know from the series of letters written by Goya to Martín Zapater, his boyhood friend in Zaragoza.

But Goya had the skill, the cunning, and the determination to make good. Thus, during the 1780s, he assiduously cultivated anyone who exuded the aroma of power or prestige, including the king's brother, Luis de Borbón; the prime minister, the Count of Floridablanca; several notable aristocrats; and Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, the person now regarded as the most illustrious exponent of Enlightenment thought in Spain. By 1786 his efforts began to pay off, as he jubilantly announced in a letter to Zapater on July 7: "I am now painter to the king, with a salary of 15,000 reales." Three years later, having won the favor of the new rulers, Charles IV and Maria Luisa of Parma, he was appointed *pintor de cámara*, or painter to the privy chamber; and a decade later he capped his ascent when he became first painter to the king.

Goya's successful public career was complemented by a fruitful private life, owing to the men of letters and the politicians he befriended, the most significant of whom were the art critic J. A. Ceán Bermúdez and the writer Leandro Fernández Moratín. Goya was no deep thinker, though he had a respectable primary education with the Piarist Fathers in Zaragoza. It is not hard to imagine him listening attentively to his friends as they swapped political and social ideas, soaking it all up like blotting paper, and occasionally interjecting a short, pungent remark of his own, if the titles of *Los Caprichos* are a fair indication of his manner and means of expression.

Until the early 1790s, Goya was able to keep the two parts of his life and personality in balance—the public Goya, covetous of the wealth and the status that he made no effort to conceal, and the private Goya, flattered to be the friend of distinguished literati and accepted in their company. But Goya's carefully crafted double life started to come apart under the weight of a series of extraordinary events. The outbreak of the French Revolution seems to have initiated the process of disintegration. The events of the summer of 1789 suddenly revealed the dark side of the Enlightenment to the Spanish government, which quickly lost much of its reforming zeal and sent the exponents of enlightened thought into exile. And three years later a personal tragedy occurred. Goya fell gravely ill, nearly losing his life and permanently losing his hearing.

His fortunes did not change overnight, however, nor did those of the monarchy, which now fell under the influence of Manuel Godoy, an upstart, corrupt guardsman and eventually a major patron of the artist. But with the continuing pressure of events, the public Goya and the private Goya could no longer coexist harmoniously. The public artist became a brush for hire and painted for anyone who paid the price, as he successfully sought to maintain his social and financial position. The private man became

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reclusive, and expressed himself in works on paper seen only by a few people. In those works he meditated on his disjointed world, on the cruel, foolish people who dominated public life in Spain.

The crisis for artist and country was reached by the Napoleonic invasion in 1808. Napoleon placed his brother, Joseph, on the Spanish throne, making prisoners of Charles IV and his petulant heir Prince Ferdinand. He then dictated a constitution to legitimize his usurpation of the Spanish crown, known as the Constitution of Bayonne. This was rejected by a small group of loyal Spaniards, who retreated to Cádiz to write a new constitution, promulgated in 1812, which declared the people sovereign and reduced the king to a figurehead. Many enlightened Spaniards, so-called *afrancesados*, decided to remain in Madrid, believing that the French offered the last, best hope to reform their backward nation. Goya was among their number.

In 1813 the English army, assisted by Spanish irregulars known as *guerrillas*, drove the French from Spain; and in 1814 Ferdinand returned to rule a prostrate, bankrupt, but hopeful nation. He immediately renounced the Constitution of 1812 and started a purge of liberals (another word coined in Spain at this time) and French sympathizers. Goya was investigated, and cleared of charges of collaborating with the regime of Joseph Bonaparte; but many of his enlightened friends had to flee the country. The artist himself later went into a kind of self-imposed exile in a small farm on the outskirts of Madrid, the famous Quinta del Sordo, which he purchased in 1819. For six years Ferdinand attempted to rule as an absolute monarch, but Spaniards who had a whiff of freedom chafed beneath the loss of their hard-won liberties.

Finally, in 1820, a coup d'état forced the king to swear allegiance to the constitution. But the so-called Constitutional Triennium ended in 1823, when the French sent an army to depose the poorly organized liberal government and restore Ferdinand to the throne. Once again the king brutally purged his enemies and reclaimed his former powers. For unknown reasons, Goya went into hiding during the purge. He seems never to have been in danger. On May 30, 1824, the king granted him permission to travel to France to take the waters of Plombières. Instead he went to Bordeaux, home of many of his exiled friends; and though he twice returned to Spain, he settled in Bordeaux for the rest of his life. The Bordeaux years were like an Indian summer for the aged painter. He lived happily with his companion, Leocadia Zorilla de Weiss, and her two children, one of whom he had fathered; and he experimented with new artistic techniques, such as lithography and miniature painting on ivory. He died on April 16, 1828, at the age of 82.

ALLEGORY ON THE ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF 1812 (1812-14)

The fascinating counterpoint between the public and private Goya, between the pragmatist and the idealist, lies at the heart of this extremely complex man. It is precisely this duality that is sacrificed in the current exhibition and its catalog, in the attempt to present the artist as a spokesman for the Enlightenment and then, in the 19th century, for the political liberalism into which it evolved. This Goya, according to the Boston museum, is a supremely relevant figure: "The political, social, and intellectual issues raised by the Enlightenment are still very much alive. By understanding the meanings Goya's images held for his contemporaries, we reach a deeper sense of their value for us today." The truth, however, is that Goya was involved with the ideas of the Enlightenment only in two relatively brief periods of his long life, and then almost exclusively as a graphic artist, not a painter.

This distinction between the genres is immediately apparent in the show, which contains about 130 works (the number and selection vary from museum to museum). Paintings constitute just over a third of the total, half of which are portraits of the artist's friends or patrons or political protagonists of the epoch. Many of the portraits are splendid, of course; but finally they are not the most revealing achievements of Goya's art. Only a handful of the pictures take us into the private world of Goya's imagination. He preferred to explore that realm in the prints and the drawings that are the heart and soul of the exhibition. To conjure up this inner world, Goya invented a completely original style.

It was a style that seems to be cut loose from its historical moorings. Turning his back on the grand manner of neoclassicism then at its peak, Goya sought inspiration from such marginal forms of artistic expression as caricatures and political cartoons. He transformed them into powerful vehicles for the exploration of an astounding range of emotions, for dimensions of experience that were considered out of place in the public medium of painting, such as sardonic humor, pungent satire, sexual intimacy, and, of course, moral indignation.

Goya's first brush with the Enlightenment can be dated to the time around 1796, the year when a group of disgraced progressive ministers were recalled to court, among them Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, who became minister of justice in 1798. But poor Jovellanos hardly had time to rearrange the office furni-

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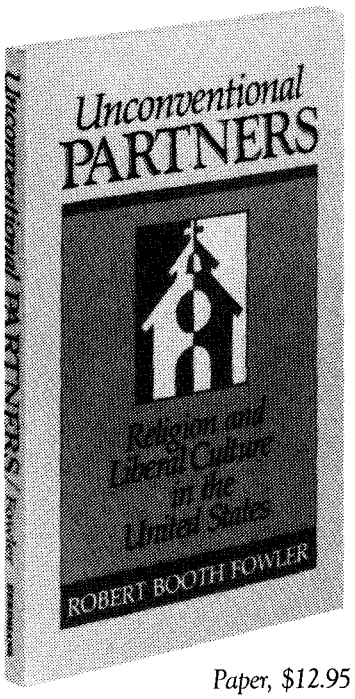

Paper, $12.95

Recent years have produced an upsurge of interest in the reemergence of religion in American politics. But what is lacking, contends Robert Booth Fowler, is a theoretical exploration of the symbiotic relationship between religion and American "liberal culture," namely, the American political idealism that has its basis in eighteenth-century common-sense realism and democratic individualism. Fowler begins by taking a careful look at various strains of two main theories about the relationship between religion and American liberalism. Believing that neither captures the present situation properly, Fowler proposes that religion indeed supports liberal culture, but only in an indirect and unintentional way. It does so by providing many Americans with desired beliefs and practices that liberalism no longer offers; religion also provides community and fills up modern liberalism's moral void by addressing matters of ultimate meaning and value.

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ture; seven months later he and his fellow *ilustrados* were again on their way out, victims of a brutal, reactionary purge conducted by José Antonio Caballero, a thuggish type who sent the ex-minister to prison in Mallorca, where he remained until 1808.

During this swan song of the Enlightenment, when his friends were in power, Goya was emboldened to create *Los Caprichos*. It was a series of 80 aquatints, published in 1799, that is justly regarded as the crowning expression of the ideals of the Spanish Enlightenment. Seventeen prints from the series, all pristine examples of the first edition, and several preparatory drawings are included in the show and brilliantly analyzed by Eleanor A. Sayre, the creator of the exhibition. Sayre has dedicated her career to the study of Goya's prints; she combines a sharp-eyed reading of the images with a vast knowledge of the literature of the Enlightenment, and masterfully explains the unique amalgam of satire and moral purpose that Goya compressed into these unforgettable images.

The sale of *Los Caprichos* was announced on February 6, 1799. A few days later, after 27 sets had been sold, the artist withdrew the prints from the market. Goya had sensed the winds of change and was careful not to be swept away. (He also may have been threatened by the Inquisition.) But in 1803, with characteristic shrewdness, he made a deal with the king and exchanged the original copper plates and unsold sets in return for a lifetime annuity for his son Javier. And four years later, continuing his public career, he had no scruples about painting the portraits of the odious Caballero and his wife, portraits that, unlike those of Jovellanos and Meléndez Valdéz, are absent from the exhibition.

The climax of Goya's engagement with the political ideas of the Enlightenment, according to Sayre, came in the years of the Napoleonic occupation and the Peninsular War, culminating in the painting called the *Allegory on the Adoption of the Constitution of 1812* and in the drawings of Album C. This was also the period when Goya etched the first section of the *Disasters of War*, his stirring indictment of the tragic consequences of taking political struggles to the battlefield. The relationship of the *Disasters* to contemporary events is self-evident. I doubt, though, that their horrendous imagery should be understood as an "appeal to reason."

At least those prints express the turmoil of the war years. The cases of the *Allegory* and Album C are not so clear. Album C, which comprises almost 130 extant sheets, is universally regarded as Goya's resounding ode to freedom. But it is generally and plausibly dated to the second constitutional period of 1820-23, and has been dated earlier largely to buttress Goya's role as a supporter and spokesman for the Constitution of 1812.

The new dating also bolsters Sayre's ecstatic but questionable interpretation of the *Allegory* as Goya's major statement of political commitment. When all is said and done, Sayre's interpretation of the life-size painting, which adorns the catalog cover, is based on circumstantial evidence. There is no written record of the origins of this picture. Sayre begins her analysis by discerning an "air of triumphant joyousness utterly unexpected in an intellectual allegory," and proceeds to decode the symbolism to fit her perception of the mood.

Goya's allegorical vocabulary, it must be said, is not very original. Two of the three figures in the composition, the winged and bearded figure with an hourglass, who is Father Time, and the seated female figure writing in a book, who is History, are commonplace symbols. They were used, for example, by Goya's contemporary Mariano Maella, in paintings for the Madrid Royal Palace. The only novel motif is the standing female, dressed in white, breasts bared, who displays a small book in one hand and is said to represent Liberty holding a copy of the Constitution of 1812.

But the mystery of the woman in white is not so easily solved. One of Goya's 19th-century biographers called her "Spain," and there is reason to believe that he was right, for the same personification appears in Goya's 1814 *Portrait of Ferdinand VII*, of all people, which is on view in the exhibition. The patrons issued specific instructions about the symbolic apparatus: it was to include a personification of Spain in the form of a statue. This image of the nation is visible just behind the king, depicted as a woman dressed in a revealing, low-cut gown, and her resemblance to the central figure in the *Allegory* is obvious. In the palm of her hand, Spain holds a book probably to be identified as a copy of one of the two constitutions decreed in the years of 1808 and 1812 (the latter was republished in 1820). The question of which text is represented in the picture is of great importance for understanding its meaning.

Sayre naturally opts for the liberal constitution of 1812. But this identification is problematic because the Napoleonic constitution of 1808 also was published in the form of a small book. Could the painting be dedicated to the French rulers of Spain? This outrageous idea rests,

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I admit, on circumstantial arguments; but those are the only sorts of arguments available, until a pertinent document of the commission is discovered.

Numerous proponents of the Enlightenment program welcomed the arrival of the French in 1808 with open arms. The Bayonne Constitution, later buttressed by the more far-reaching Edicts of Chamartín, promised the sweeping reforms of church and state that had eluded the *ilustrados*, some of whom decided to collaborate with Joseph Bonaparte. Among the ranks of these *afrancesados* were many of Goya's friends and patrons, including Cabarrús, Meléndez Valdéz, Moratín, and Father Llorente, all of whose portraits are in the show. The question of Goya's own attitude toward the French is vexed; suffice it to say that there are reasons to believe that he was a "passive" collaborator. Goya was adept at riding the waves of change, at keeping his head above water. It is not inconceivable that he accepted a commission from the French. For who else, during the war years, could have ordered a painting almost ten feet high and obviously desired for public display?

Admittedly, the artist did not put his heart or imagination into this stilted allegory. He simply dusted off a small oil sketch done earlier and covered the naked Truth with a white gown. (Goya utilized the same approach in another official commission of the Napoleonic era, in the *Allegory of the City of Madrid*, perhaps as a concession to French neoclassical taste.) Still, a few years later, during the tumultuous period of 1820-23, the private Goya did reflect on Spain's political agony. There are four major artistic series that can be identified with this critical moment: the "Black Paintings" made for the Quinta del Sordo and now in the Prado, the drawings of Album C, the set of etchings known as *Los Disparates*, and an appendix of 18 prints to the *Disasters of War*, which Goya called "*caprichos enfáticos*" ("striking caprices"). Because of their extraordinary inventiveness and the originality of their style, these images pose staggering problems of interpretation. It is a pity that many of the entries about them in the exhibition's catalog were entrusted to junior scholars, some of whom are only recent college graduates, whose work was inspired but not sufficiently controlled by the senior curator. The lack of measure and proportion reaches disconcerting levels at times.

In approaching these works—and the "Black Paintings"—it must be remembered that they were seen only by a few of Goya's intimate friends. Neither *Los Disparates* nor the *Disasters of War* were published in the artist's lifetime; and Album C, like the other sketchbooks, was intended from the first to be a private work. As a matter of fact, this exhibition is one of the few times, if not the first time, that a representative selection of all the series of prints and drawings has ever been shown to the general public. This may seem a rather banal observation, except for the fact that it drastically changes the notion of the crusading artist that is implicitly promoted in the show's labels and catalog entries.

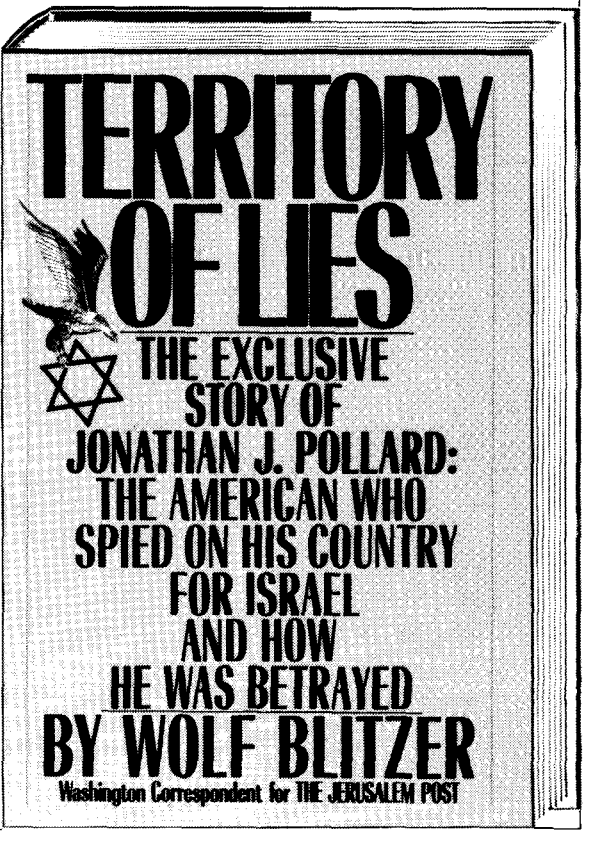
Goya is not to be faulted for playing it safe. The problems faced by artists who are called upon to take public positions on controversial issues have been uncomfortably illustrated in the Salman Rushdie affair; and Goya was living at a time when the concept of political martyrdom was just being invented. His was the caution of the self-made man who has known the life of struggle and insecurity and will not risk all that he has finally gained by taking sides against established authority. Sayre alludes to the abortive publication histories of the print series, but she and some of the other writers of the catalog seem to ignore the profound consequences for understanding Goya's putative role as a standard-bearer for Spanish liberalism.

Equally vexing is the glossing over of the striking change of mood that occurs between *Los Caprichos* and this group of later works, especially *Los Disparates*.

The Spy Israel Left Out in the Cold

Jonathan Jay Pollard is an American Zionist serving a life sentence because he spied against his country for Israel. Drawing on exclusive interviews with Pollard, as well as high-level access to U.S. and Israeli government sources, Wolf Blitzer, Washington Bureau Chief of *The Jerusalem Post*, probes the disturbing questions raised by this controversial case:

* Why did Pollard receive the harshest possible sentence?
* Does the U.S. routinely deny Israel vital intelligence?
* Is anti-semitism a factor in U.S. intelligence decisions?
* Why did Israel abandon Pollard at the end?
* What are the consequences for U.S.-Israeli relations?


TERRITORY OF LIES
THE EXCLUSIVE STORY OF JONATHAN J. POLLARD: THE AMERICAN WHO SPIED ON HIS COUNTRY FOR ISRAEL AND HOW HE WAS BETRAYED
BY WOLF BLITZER
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Having defined Goya as an unshakable believer in the power of reason and the liberal cause, Sayre and her collaborators apply a standard format for the catalog entries. In each image a manifestation of an evil of unreason is identified (censorship, political repression, ecclesiastical hypocrisy, aristocratic ignorance, and so on). It becomes Goya's point of attack. The interpretation is then reinforced by a string of quotations from Enlightenment or liberal authors designed to show the currency of the ideas and their availability to Goya (who is implicitly portrayed as an exceptionally well-read artist).

This way into the images works very well for *Los Caprichos*, with its explicitly satirical purpose, and for the "*caprichos enfáticos*" and many of the sheets of Album C, where the political content is evident. The entries on the Inquisition drawings, for instance, are excellent, and full of new understandings of their content. But sometimes, in order to score a point for the liberal side, there are almost willful misreadings of the meanings. To take but one example: in the entry on the "*capricho enfático*" that Goya titled "Murió la verdad" ("Truth died"), the female allegorical figure is identified as "Constitution" (referring to the previous interpretation of *Allegory on the Constitution*), despite the artist's unambiguous and entirely sufficient label. Thus, Goya's belief in an abstract virtue is given an unintended political spin.

More egregiously, the reading of *Los Disparates*, Goya's most audacious and original creation, makes no concession to the dark, almost hysterical mood of these amazing prints. They seem to evoke, after all, the failure, not the triumph, of reason, no matter how many contemporary texts are cited. Fred Licht, in a carefully nuanced essay that politely puts a distance between himself and Sayre's team, makes an essential point about *Los Caprichos* that is even more applicable to the late, visionary works: "What remains impervious to reason and contrary to intellect is the uncanny mood, the presence of unseen menaces that raise uncomfortable questions regarding the inadequacy of our intellectual resources when combatting evil." Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, the author of the catalog's lead essay and co-director of the exhibition, harbors similar reservations about the relentless application of all these texts to Goya's creations; and it is hard to disagree.

By the time we reach the drawings of the later sketchbooks, the Enlightening interpretation has become slightly manic. The drawing of a hunter and his dog from Album E becomes, through a tortured process of interpretation, "a commentary on the tyranny Spain suffered after Fernando VII's restoration of absolutism as a form of government." Nowhere is it mentioned that Goya, in his youth, was an avid hunter, or that he dedicated several drawings of Album F to perfectly innocent representations of the chase. The Bordeaux albums, which are full of wonderful, witty drawings by an ancient but irrepressible artist, have been carefully culled for subjects that can be squeezed into the Enlightenment mold, where many fit but poorly. *Animal de letras* ("Learned Animal"), which shows a gigantic catlike creature reading a book while a man in the background smirks, is presented as a satire of the legal profession, by equating "*letras*" with "*letrado*." The pun aside, the fact is that by the 19th century the primary meaning of the word "*letrado*" was no longer "lawyer" but "lettered." Without much effort, the drawing might just as well be understood as a satire on learning, of which, by this time, poor Goya might have had his fill, in the unlikely event that he had read all the texts adduced in the catalog.

In fact, in so many of the late works, the light of reason seems to dim before the advancing powers of darkness. In Plate 43 of *Los Caprichos*, the famous print titled "El sueño de la razón produce monstruos" ("The sleep [or dream] of reason produces monsters"), Goya implied that the demons of unreason could be banished by enlightened thought. Twenty years later, having survived a hellish period of war and political upheaval that ended with the triumph of brutality and absolutism, he had lost his confidence in the redeeming power of truth and reason. In the late works, the combat between good and evil is replayed; but now the spoils often go to the latter.

It is unfortunate that Goya's moving struggle with these demons has been ignored in this exhibition, for it is precisely his unresolved conflict between hope and despair that speaks to us as if he were our contemporary. In Album C, a world governed by goodness still seems possible. In the "Black Paintings," where a new and terrifying language is used to express dark feelings never before seen in art, Goya planted the seeds of the *fleurs de mal*. Evil, as portrayed by Goya, is not the absence of God, it is the absence of reason. (To that extent, he was a true son of the Enlightenment.) In this godless world, it was no longer possible to ascribe evil thoughts and deeds to Satan; they emanated from deep within the mind and spirit and materialized as disturbing, unreal visions.

Put differently, Goya was the inventor of the iconography of the id. He was the first painter to conjure up the shadowy world where subconscious forces take control of human destiny. In one of the plates of *Los Disparates*, absent from this exhibition, we see a young woman swept off her feet in the mouth of a rearing horse. Her arms are akimbo, her expression ecstatic. We understand that she is caught up in the throes of an orgasmic experience. In the background, two gigantic, ratlike creatures, their menacing shapes partly hidden by the horizon, lurk in the shadows. One has an open mouth and devours a female figure whose head and shoulders have already disappeared into the maw. No precise textual source has ever been provided for this startling image, and none will be found; but the extraordinary evocation of sexuality and guilt is at once apparent to our post-Freudian age.

In a way, the rationalistic premise of

Sycamores

As a child I was enchanted by their white branches,
their cool lightning veining dark woods along streams,
but soon was disappointed they were not *pure* white
and here and there were blotched gray-green.
I see them in a different light now, here in Assisi,

the sun splashing everywhere, swallows sickling the air,
as a girl unshutters her window and waters the geraniums
you see flaming the sills eternally in Italy.
While one arm pours and the other tends the soil,
her skin is clearly unmarred as it brindles

with the olive shadows of the rich green leaves.
Perhaps the blotches of death we so fear when they appear
in the light of age are really the harmless shadows
of something our whole lives have been carefully tending,
something unseen perhaps, but vitally green.

FRED DINGS

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Sayre's exhibition is itself almost outdated. Never mind that it minimizes the blend of intoxicating optimism and bloody terror that characterized the revolutionary period ("the best of times and the worst of times," as Dickens later described it), a unique, chilling blend that Goya captured as no other artist did. It also fails to see that the inexhaustible Goya can now be understood as the prophet of the social, moral, and intellectual disintegration that is occurring as the spirit of the Enlightenment is, all around us, quelled.

The Phenomenology of Punk

BY LOUIS MENAND

Lipstick Traces: A Secret History of the Twentieth Century by Greil Marcus

(Harvard University Press, 496 pp., $29.95)

"I am no more capable of mulling over Elvis without thinking about Herman Melville," wrote Greil Marcus in his first book, *Mystery Train: Images of America in Rock 'n' Roll Music* (1975), "than I am of reading Jonathan Edwards . . . without putting on Robert Johnson's records as background music." Readers skeptical of the style of critical analysis this disposition encourages are not likely to respond warmly to the news that in his new book, Marcus considers at some length the intellectual filiations between punk music and the writings of Theodor Adorno. "You can find punk," as he explains it, "between every other line of *Minima Moralia*."

The truth is that Marcus is on much firmer ground discussing the Sex Pistols' refinements on the critical practice of the Frankfurt School than he was trying to squeeze Elvis Presley and Randy Newman alongside Melville and Lincoln in the pantheon of American culture heroes. *Mystery Train* was a book that staked out highbrow-sounding claims for popular culture. *Lipstick Traces*, despite appearances, is not really a book about popular culture at all. This is a fact that Marcus does his best to obscure.

Marcus is a professional rock critic with an advanced degree in political thought from Berkeley. His writing exhibits many of the qualities these credentials suggest. *Lipstick Traces* displays a lively scholarly curiosity about its subject, handles ideas with journalistic flair and facility, and treats commercial culture in its context without forgetting that it is something real people really experience. It also provides solemn exegeses of the lyrics of old 45s, gives breathless accounts of ideas no longer fresh, and contains many, many assertions inflated to the point of bathos. A representative sample: "Still, Elvis Presley and the Sex Pistols changed the patterns of everyday life—raised its stakes—all over the world. If what they did led to no official revolutions, it made life all over the world more interesting, and life continues to be more interesting than it would have been had they never appeared."

Marcus is a writer deeply in love with his subject, and like many people in love, he cannot stop talking about it. *Lipstick Traces* is a prolix and redundant book, perhaps a third again as long as it needs to be. For some reason, it tells its story twice, in what are called, with touching faith in readerly forbearance, "Version One," an extended essay, and "Version Two," a narrative account of the ideas presented in "Version One."

Boiled down, the book's argument is that punk music is one manifestation of the negationist impulse in Western culture—the impulse to invert or explode every received value, not as a preliminary to erecting new values but as a way of clearing the ground of consciousness as thoroughly as possible. As Marcus puts it in the case of the Sex Pistols:

> Damning God and the state, work and leisure, home and family, sex and play, the audience and itself, the music briefly made it possible to experience all those things as if they were not natural facts but ideological constructs: things that had been made and therefore could be altered, or done away with altogether.

And elsewhere: "Negation is the act that would make it self-evident to everyone that the world is not as it seems."

Negationist art is therefore art that hates art, since aesthetic values—beauty, order, pleasure, whatever else conventionally attaches to the work of art—are among the lies that must be exploded. And negationist politics is a kind of utopian or anarchist anti-politics, since the

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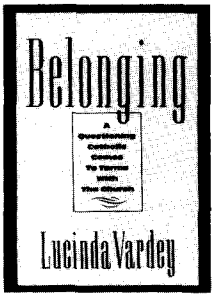

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negationist spirit is similarly disrespectful of "justice," "tolerance," "civility," and other constructions of the dominant order.

But of course this culture does have an aesthetic, and it has a political theory. The aesthetic is the aesthetic of disruption; of "*détournement*," the appropriation and recontextualization of cultural signs (Duchamp's mustache on the Mona Lisa or Sherry Levine's photographs of classic photographs); and of unrehearsed performance—the art of whatever happens. The political theory is Marxism on its head.

Marx and Engels warned in *The German Ideology* that revolution against the superstructure was futile, on grounds that you cannot save people from drowning by convincing them that gravity is a bourgeois illusion. But it has been the belief of many 20th-century revolutionists in the Western democracies that what makes radical structural change so difficult in those societies is precisely the success of the dominant culture in persuading people who are drowning that they are breathing freely. So that until consciousness is turned upside down and its contents forcefully shaken out, until people are awakened to the realization that "breathing freely" is really a euphemism for spiritual asphyxiation, no better society can hope to emerge.

What Marx failed to appreciate, according to this view, was the use capitalism would make of leisure, the great byproduct of 20th-century material abundance. Leisure threatened the status quo by affording people the space to contemplate the true poverty of their condition; capitalism responded by turning leisure into a commodity, creating what one of the leading figures in Marcus's story, Guy Debord, called "the society of the spectacle." Culture-as-spectacle thus became the ideological concrete encasing the capitalist social formation and holding it in place, reproducing and reaffirming its values in a one-way conversation flowing from the powerful to the passive. In these circumstances all the revolutionary can do is to search out the fissures (the "contradictions") in the concrete, insert the explosive charge of his anti-art, and hope that the shock waves will dislodge a piece of the superstructure. But there is no blueprint for the new world. What happens if and when the concrete shell is broken through is, in the customary phrase, "up for grabs."

None of this, of course, is news. One of the most aggravating and misleading features of *Lipstick Traces* is the impression it continually creates that there is something thrillingly secret and underground about these ideas and that Marcus is the first person to have discovered and explained them. In fact, the ideas amount to a virtual cliché in the substantial body of writing on postmodernism. Almost every issue in the last ten years of journals like the *New Left Review* and *Social Text* has had something to say on the subject; and the number of writers who have already been over significant portions of this ground in intellectual history—from Martin Jay and Mark Poster to Fredric Jameson and Dick Hebdige—is not small. Marcus cites none of this work.

Marcus's main claim to a fresh contribution to our knowledge of this culture — "negationist" or "postmodernist" or whatever one wants to call it—rests on the line of cases he has strung together. *Lipstick Traces* is exceptionally rich in illustration. Marcus sees his obsession reflected everywhere, and has culled an unusual range of examples of the culture of spectacle on the one hand and the negationist impulse on the other—from the stories of medieval millenarian sects to Michael Jackson's 1984 "Victory" tour.

Marcus's central sequence of examples is framed by two events in French political history, the Paris Commune of 1871 and the general strike of May 1968. The spirit of the first was sustained, he proposes, in a series of art (or anti-art) movements that he chronicles in considerable and vivid detail: the dadaists who performed in the Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich in 1916; the French lettrists, a tiny band of artist-agitators inspired by the legend of dada, whose most successful assault on public attention came in 1950 when one of their number, Michel Mourre, a lapsed Dominican friar and former Nazi collaborator, interrupted an Easter mass at Notre Dame to announce from the pulpit that God was dead; and the situationists, another Left Bank groupuscule that evolved out of lettrism in the late '50s and that was led by the theoretician of the spectacle, an avant-garde filmmaker named Guy Debord. The situationists became the primary influence on the precursor of the May 1968 uprising, the student takeover of the University of Strasbourg in the spring of 1966.

These movements, Marcus asserts, shared a motivation, a vocabulary, a philosophy; and their spirit was reincarnated in the 1970s in the music of the punk rockers. He calls this sequence a "secret history," a phrase that can be glossed by the following passage:

> Unfulfilled desires transmit themselves across the years in unfathomable ways, and all that remains on the surface are bits of symbolic discourse, deaf to their sources and blind to their objects—but these frag-

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ments of language, hidden in the oaths and blasphemies of songs like "Anarchy in the U.K." or "God Save the Queen" . . . , are a last link to notions that have gone under the ground, into a cultural unconscious. All that remains are wishes without language: all that remains is unmade history, which is to say the possibility of poetry. As the poetry is made, language recovers and finds its target: the history that has been made.

"Secret history" is unofficial history, the history made by those written out of the mainstream. Since the official culture patrols the surface, little of this secret history is visible; but the desires that produced it persist, "under the ground," and break out sporadically into artistic or political expression. Still, the history of this culture remains secret even to its practitioners, all of whom give voice to the same wishes and the same despair unconscious of their predecessors. When this buried history has been brought to light, Marcus concludes, we begin to understand "why any good punk song can sound like the greatest thing you ever heard, which it does."

The thesis almost would be worth evaluating if the facts of the matter were not so inconveniently "on the surface." The Sex Pistols were put together in the mid-1970s by a pop-culture entrepreneur called Malcolm McLaren, about whom no one seems to have a good word to say. McLaren operated a marital aid and bondage boutique in the King's Road; but he was also, after his fashion, an intellectual. The seminal influences on his thought were Andy Warhol, whose art he admired as mass-production Duchamp, and the French situationists.

As an art student in the '60s and after, McLaren had moved in the outer circles of the British wing, known as King Mob, of the situationist movement. Situationism was everywhere in British art colleges in the '70s. The brief Strasbourg takeover had produced some influential examples of the art of *détournement* that were widely circulated and imitated; *Leaving the 20th Century: The Incomplete Work of the Situationists* (1974) by King Mob's Christopher Gray, and Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* (translated in 1977), which opens with an account of the lettrist assault on Notre Dame, seem to have been required reading. These things were part of the environment that produced punk. (So were the racial violence and economic misery of British life in the '70s, but these mere historical contingencies play little part in Marcus's account.)

Punk was music from a theory. A product of the British art college scene, it derived in a completely self-conscious

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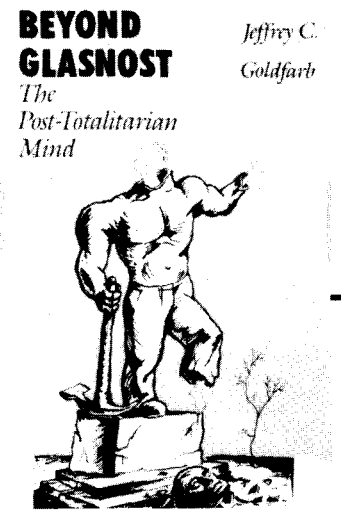

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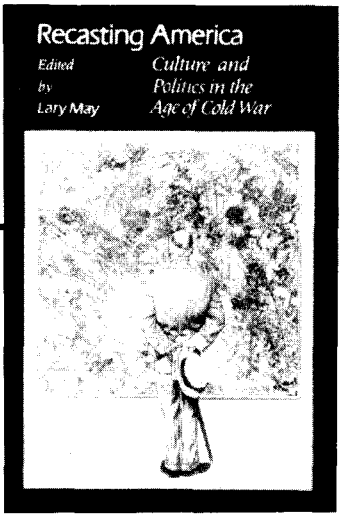

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way from the critical tradition that Marcus has mapped out. Its strategy, in the now-standard postmodernist mode, was to turn the business side of art into an artistic medium—to make a few dollars by making art about making art to make a few dollars, and then, in the name of "up for grabs," to spit on the whole enterprise. Which is why a commercial form like pop music presented itself as the ideal artistic vehicle: it represented so perfectly the commodification of leisure in an advanced capitalist society.

When McLaren drafted John Lydon to be the Sex Pistols' singer and gave him the nom de guerre Johnny Rotten, he also gave him Gray's *Leaving the 20th Century* to read. The Sex Pistols' first hit song, "Anarchy in the U.K.," was written not by the band but by McLaren's partner, Jamie Reid, a former situationist and the designer of Gray's book. Reid was also responsible for most of the poster and album art that was associated with the Sex Pistols and that is today emblematic of international (and happily commodified) punk style. The dada side of punk culture—the bricolage manner of dress, the torn-letter art, the incoherent lyrics—didn't come from the situationists. It came from dada itself: one of the first British punk bands was called Cabaret Voltaire. The road from the Sex Pistols back to dada could not, in short, be more clearly marked.

Nearly all these facts are scattered about *Lipstick Traces*, though you can find them a good deal more handily in Simon Frith and Howard Horne's *Art into Pop* (1987). The point is that there is nothing farfetched about considering punk in the context of various European avant-garde art movements, and nothing very mysterious about it either. From Gray's book in 1974 to "Anarchy in the U.K." in 1976 is not very far, even for an idea traveling "under the ground."

It's just that this is not the way Marcus prefers to conceive of his project. In a conventional historical account, he concedes near the end of his book:

> Johnny Rotten appears as a mouthpiece; I prefer to think of him as a medium. . . . An unknown tradition of old pronouncements, poems, and events, a secret history of ancient wishes and defeats, came to bear on Johnny Rotten's voice—and because this tradition lacked both cultural sanction and political legitimacy, because this history was comprised of only unfinished, unsatisfactory stories, it carried tremendous force.

But the tradition was not an "unknown," and it did not lack "cultural sanction and political legitimacy." It was the tradition of the politically advanced art college student of the '70s (and has remained so into the '80s), and it had the sanction of the like-minded. To argue that this tradition was somehow outside history because it lacked similar sanction from the BBC and the Thatcher government is to subscribe to the politically convenient but simplistic belief that the official culture is perfectly hegemonic and perfectly monolithic.

It is also, especially when the tradition is extended to include medieval millenarians and other distant movements, to reinvent a well-worn conceit of the old school of *Kulturgeschichte*: the notion of ideas—"the classical spirit" or "Alexandrianism"—as permanent impulses that recur throughout human history like so many painted horses on the carousel (or so many moles under the earth), emerging into consciousness to mark the character of an epoch and then drifting into an eclipse of decades or centuries.

Marcus prefers his notion of a "secret" history because, he says, when you provide a genealogy for an idea, you vitiate its subversive force, you turn it into official history. To footnote an event, to provide it with a historical explanation, is to transform "a casual aside into an embrace of the whole social order." History, in other words, is part of the concrete. This logic is the escape clause common to all styles of postmodernist thought, from Johnny Rotten to Richard Rorty. The postmodernist impulse is to historicize everything, to show that what is taken for natural and inevitable is only the ideological construction of some social order whose own existence is contingent. That order maintains its grip by passing its values off as real and universal rather than constructed and provisional. Everything, on this view, can be historicized, can be lifted from its context to demonstrate its provisional character—with one exception. The exception is the impulse to historicize. Like most theoreticians, the postmodernist is exempt from his own theory.

This is the point of Marcus's history without footnotes, and of his many references to premodern (and sometimes non-Western) cultural phenomena. He wants to say that negationism, unlike every other idea, is not an idea of a particular time and place, but a universal impulse. He wants to locate punk outside of history. Of course insofar as it includes information that permits us to explain the Sex Pistols' music by understanding its background and context, *Lipstick Traces* contains the negation of its own thesis. This shows the proper negationist spirit, and even has a nice mock-Frankfurt School ring to it; but it was probably not the idea.

Marcus's enthusiasm for the tradition he describes is, on the evidence of this book, fairly unbounded. He is witty enough in noting its extravagances, but the extravagances only seem to enhance the appeal. It is possible to wonder, finishing the book, whether he has understood the negationist idea in all its dimensions. ●

The roots of his excitement, Marcus explains in an epilogue, are in the Berkeley Free Speech Movement of 1964, an event in which he participated and which, he says, "formed the standard against which I've judged the present and the past ever since . . . an incomplete but indelible image of the good public life." "Your own history," he writes of those days, "was lying in pieces on the ground, and you had the choice of picking up the pieces or of passing them by. . . . Everything connected to a totality, and the totality was how you wanted to live: as a subject or as an object of history."

Events like the Free Speech Movement did seem for many who participated to be moments in which anything was possible, in which everything was "up for grabs." It was a stimulating emotion. But the source of the emotion was not newly discovered freedom, it was newly discovered empowerment. "Anything might happen" because you and people of like mind suddenly realized that institutions (particularly universities) were vulnerable to your collective desires in ways you had never imagined. But like-mindedness was the crucial ingredient. A thousand protesters with a thousand opinions could do nothing; a hundred protesters with one very strong opinion could shut down the town. People who rebel against society, or who just "do their own thing," are, now as in the '60s, pretty much as formed and predictable as people who do society's thing.

This is, in fact, one of the unintended lessons of Marcus's story. For no group is more fanatically committed to the eradication of error than the group that renounces all authority. After the experience of the Cabaret Voltaire in 1916, the dadaists spent the rest of their lives arguing about who had betrayed the movement most. The lettrists and the situationists were regularly purged; in the end, the French situationist movement had, officially, only one member—Debord. He had excommunicated all the rest. Even the Sex Pistols, in their mayfly career, managed to shed one band member, Glen Matlock (the only Sex Pistol with any song-writing talent), and to replace him with a more profound embodiment of negation, the unhappy and untalented Sid Vicious.

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The winnowing of art movements produces gossip and bad feeling. The winnowing of social groups is another matter. The doctrine of "permanent revolution," a less catchy phrase than "up for grabs" but an ideological cousin, is a theory that some societies in this century have actually put into practice. It is characteristic of the otherworldliness of Marcus's enthusiasm that in his lengthy treatise on the history of efforts to turn the world upside down he scarcely considers what that would mean as a social fact of more than a few months' duration.

For sooner or later, values and ideas congeal, no matter how bloodless and successful the revolution in consciousness, and life goes on again under slightly different concrete. "*Sous les pavés, la plage*" was one of the slogans the situationists contributed to the uprising of May 1968: "Beneath the pavement, the beach." One thing many people who lived through the '60s think they learned from the experience is that beneath the pavement, there is more pavement.

Magic and Catastrophe

BY HILLEL HALKIN

See Under: LOVE by David Grossman

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 451 pp., $19.95)

"Meteoric" may be overstating it, but David Grossman's rise has been quick. All but unknown in Israel six years ago (except as the radio newscaster that he still is) when his first book, a volume of short stories called *The Jogger*, appeared to no great fanfare, he is today considered one of his country's leading writers and seems on his way to the kind of prominence enjoyed abroad by such Hebrew authors as Amos Oz and A. B. Yehoshua, who have been publishing for decades. Four volumes comprise his output to date, which is appearing in reverse order in English: first his most recent book, *The Yellow Wind* (Hebrew, 1987), a journalistic report on the West Bank that came out in translation a year ago; now *See Under: LOVE*, his second novel (1986); and last, his first novel, *The Smile of the Lamb* (1983), which is scheduled for American publication next year.

Routine though this is in a publishing world that commonly discovers foreign authors via their latest success at home and then proceeds to mine their work backward, it obscures for the English public an impressive thing about Grossman, namely, his growth from book to book. Far from being an instant prodigy, he has gotten steadily better after an unprepossessing start. The stories in *The Jogger* are doggedly wordy; it is as if their diverse narrators (among them an Israeli long-distance runner, an American Vietnam deserter, and a British journalist settled in Haifa), despairing of any possibility of precision or concision in language, chose to subdue it by sheer saturation. *The Smile of the Lamb*, while excessively verbose too, has some fine moments, especially when two of its main characters, a half-crazed, half-clairvoyant Arab peasant and the confused young Israeli officer whom he has spiritually adopted, are onstage. *See Under: LOVE*, a novel about the Holocaust, is hardly a model of tight construction either, but it is something that Grossman's previous books are not: a truly extraordinary work of fiction.

I say a novel about the Holocaust, but this is misleading. In fact, *See Under: LOVE* is less about the Holocaust than about imagining the Holocaust; less about imagining these responses than about the imagination of the imaginer, a young Israeli writer named Shlomo Neumann who is known by his childhood nickname of "Momik." Of the four parts into which the novel is divided, only the first, which deals with Momik's childhood, has actually "happened" in its entirety. Most of Part Two is devoted to a surrealistic account of the last days of the Polish Jewish writer and artist Bruno Schulz; Parts Three and Four are attempts to re-create another past that is lost, this one because it has perished in the burned-out brain of Momik's granduncle, a demented Holocaust survivor named Anshel Wasserman who has lost the power of intelligible speech.

Momik, an only child whose parents are survivors too, knows almost nothing about the history of his granduncle, who comes to live with the family. The old man cannot talk about the past and Mo-

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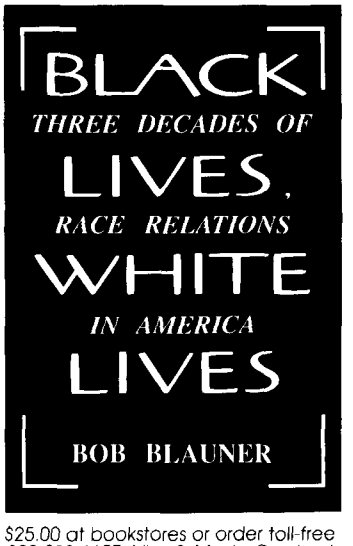

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mik's parents will not talk about it, the story of what happened "over there" being a taboo subject in the household, which seeks to shield Momik from its horrors. And yet precisely because of this, he is obsessed by it: a lonely, fearful, introverted child, he creates for himself an imaginary Land of Over There inhabited by "the Nazi Beast," a term that he takes to refer to a real animal.

The arrival of his granduncle, amid whose incomprehensible mutterings only the mysterious word *herrneigel* can be made out, fuels Momik's fantasies even further, and soon the old man is woven into them. And not just him, for there is one fact about him that Momik knows: Anshel Wasserman was once, under the pen name "Scheherezade," the Hebrew author of a series of children's tales called "The Children of the Heart," one installment of which Momik has found among some old things in the basement. In addition to the Nazi Beast, Wasserman himself (along with some eccentric Jerusalem neighbors who share a street bench with him, also refugees from Over There) and the heroes of his series—a band of wonder-working youngsters who specialize in saving innocents in distress—populate the make-believe world in which Momik's childhood is spent.

Cut to Momik 20 years later, a would-be novelist struggling with writer's block, an unhappy marriage, and a no happier extramarital affair. Stymied in his life and work, haunted by the unarticulated voices of the past, he is determined to break through by writing the adult version of his childhood fantasy. Wasserman, his Jerusalem benchmates, the mysterious Herr Neigel, and the Children of the Heart will be the characters of this novel.

But first Momik takes us on a detour, for he has become absorbed by the figure of Bruno Schulz, who was killed by the Nazis too. Or rather (Momik imagines), who was not killed by them at all but managed to flee the ghetto of his native town of Drohobycz for the port city of Danzig—where, jumping off a pier to escape his pursuers, he joins a school of salmon and gradually turns into a fish. Deferring for the moment any discussion of what this odd episode is all about (part of it is narrated in flouncing accents by the Ocean itself, personified as a wickedly coquettish, several-billion-year-old vamp), one thing can immediately be said of it: Momik may suffer from writer's block, but when he writes, he writes! Taking us on a cruise of the icy waters of the Baltic, he treats us to a tour-de-force description of salmonhood that makes us all but grow gills along with Schulz.

Part Three, in which Momik is finally writing the novel that he has wanted to write, begins with an equally fantastic fictional premise. Its action takes place in a death camp whose commandant's name is Neigel and one inmate of which is Wasserman. The two men meet because of a strange circumstance: a camp guard has tried shooting Wasserman, has discovered that bullets do not harm him, and has turned him over to his commanding officer. When Neigel confirms that Wasserman is indeed bullet-proof and learns that he is the creator of the Children of the Heart, a serial he followed in German translation as a child, the two men strike a deal: Wasserman, who wants only to be allowed to share the fate of his murdered wife and daughter, agrees to tell Neigel a new series of Children of the Heart tales, and Neigel, who wishes to be entertainingly distracted at the end of each gruesome day's work, promises to put a new bullet into Wasserman after each installment. Thus, Wasserman becomes the Scheherezade he once called himself, but in reverse: rather than spin his fictions to keep himself alive, he does so in the hope of dying.

But whereas Neigel's bullets do not have an effect, Wasserman's stories do. As he improvises a new adventure for the Children of the Heart (now grown into middle-aged adults) that is far more daringly imaginative than any of the conventional potboilers he stopped writing long ago, casting his heroes as spiritual resistance fighters against the Nazis over the entranced Neigel's feeble protests, a personal relationship develops between the two men. Night after night, while the smoke rises from the crematoria outside the window, they sit facing each other, the SS mass-murderer and the has-been Hebrew author, who slowly drips the humanizing poison of his story into his captor's heart.

Part Four of *See Under: LOVE* (at the outset of which we learn that Neigel has killed himself) is written in the form of a lexicon called *The Full Encyclopedia of the Life of Kazik*. This is compiled by Momik, one of whose thwarted projects in the past has been the composition of a Children's Encyclopedia of the Holocaust, Kazik being the homunculus-like son of two of the Children of the Heart; born to them in Nazi-occupied Warsaw, he dies nearly 24 hours later at the age of 64 after going through all the stages of human development, time having been magically speeded up for him to the point that one second of his life equals eight hours of an ordinary person's.

The encyclopedia, however, does not tell the story of Kazik alone. Digested in it under such headings as CREATION;

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YOUTH; LIFE, THE JOY OF; LUNATICS, THE VOYAGE OF, and so forth, are the new adventures of the Children of the Heart and their cohorts— that is, of the band's leader, "the amiable Otto Brigg"; his sister, "blithe Paula of the golden hair"; their friend, Doctor Albert Fried, who speaks the language of all living things, "from lice eggs to horned buffalos"; the Armenian magician Harotian, who can change the colors of roses by staring at them; the Russian technical genius Sergei, who builds a machine that traps time; and such ex-neighbors of Momik's as the nymphomaniac exhibitionist Hannah Zeitrin, the public onanist Yedidya Munin, the morbidly sensitive apothecary Aharon Marcus, and others.

These half-mad misfits have been found by Otto Brigg in the streets of Warsaw, and as part of the unconventional war that he seeks to wage against the Nazis he is determined to encourage what he calls the peculiar "art" of each. In Munin, who is saving up his sperm toward a giant orgasm that will shoot him heavenward like a rock, Brigg sees "the great Orgasman . . . a man of longing more devout than anyone has ever known . . . a man of flourishing dreams, winged as angels . . . champion of unspilled seed, artist of suppressed ejaculation, arch-copulator who never knew the touch of women, Casanova of vain imaginings, Don Juan of illusions"; in Hannah Zeitrin, an "artist of love . . . so beautiful [she] would catch . . . the hungry eye of God Almighty," so that "she wanders naked all night long, in the heat and cold . . . trying to seduce God, fighting her war with Him"; in Marcus, an inner "alchemist of emotion," who has discovered and classified "six new shades of feeling" between anxiety and terror alone. Brigg's aim is to fight fire with fire: if the Nazis have put the best in human nature (the capacity for heroism, the need for meaning, the readiness for self-sacrifice) to the most horrendous of ends, the Children of the Heart will enlist the worst for the most sublime of purposes.

And yet ultimately, racing against time, which has never been so implacable as it is with the short-lived Kazik, Brigg's scheme to bring about a cabalistic transformation of reality cannot succeed. As Wasserman explains to Neigel:

> Ah, well, nu, both you and my own Children of the Heart have tried to work a kind of miracle . . . an exaggeration of human nature. . . . you in your way and my Children of the Heart in theirs. We were both trying to create a new man . . . and we failed . . . feh, old fool that I am! . . . I, I wanted miracles here! A man who wants to fly up to heaven, a woman after the heart of

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God! A Moses of Warsaw I tried to be! Ai, no, Herr Neigel. There is no hope in miracles, neither in miracles of evil nor in miracles of mercy. Out of the leaven of humanity one cannot bake a miracle! One must take it step by step, nebech, and get along with the barest necessities, yes, by loving and hating what there is, love thy neighbor as thyself and hate thy neighbor as thyself, this is the whole law. And have COMPASSION . . .

If Brigg has failed, though, Neigel's end would seem to prove that Wasserman has not: in his ability to move a conscienceless killer to the penitence of suicide, the power of the artist over a brute reality has been vindicated. And unlike the "arts" of the Children of the Heart and their protégés, Wasserman's art is wholly in his language, which is one of *See Under: LOVE*'s most remarkable features. To call it a virtuoso performance of Maskilic Hebrew, faithful and inventive at once, will mean little to the English reader; let us say, then, that Wasserman's speech is an ad-libbed version of the written Hebrew of the semi-modernized East European Jewish intelligentsia of the second half of the 19th century—that is, it is grammatically and semantically archaic, rhetorically ornate, studded with verses and bits of verses from the Bible and classical sources, and full of borrowing from other languages for words, high and low, that Hebrew lacked until its spoken revival.

In short, it is radically different from the Hebrew of contemporary Israel, whether demotic (the language of Part One of *See Under: LOVE*) or literary (the language of most of Part Two); every word of it affirms its speaker's allegiance to an old-fashioned system of values in which a self-deprecatory humor, an abhorrence of violence, and a belief in the objective existence of Good and Evil are accented norms. In the face of the bestiality around him, Wasserman's language—which was already badly dated in the years before World War I when he wrote the Children of the Heart tales—amounts to a moral position in itself, although unfortunately, one that is not easily conveyed in translation despite the best effort of Betsy Rosenberg, who on the whole has done an outstanding job.

Of course, Wasserman's speech—the sly, timid, ironic discourse of an arch-exilic and apparently eternal Jew—is the creation of the Israeli-born Momik, who has fashioned it out of the single (and, to the professional literary eye, uninspiringly cliché-ridden) example of his grand-uncle's prose found by him as a child. Wasserman himself, indeed, is the triumph of Momik, who has re-created in him a human world out of the most threadbare of clues, just as he has done with Neigel, Zeitrin, Munin, Marcus, and the Children of the Heart. In the face of his own doubts about his abilities as a writer, which have only been aggravated by his wife's and lover's loss of faith in him, Momik has achieved a triple redemption: of his childhood; of the transcendent personality embryonic within the mute and fallen human beings he has known; and of the imaginative artist in himself.

In all of these things his model has been Bruno Schulz—the same Schulz who, as demiurge of Drohobycz, turned the friends, family, and neighbors of his quite unexceptional childhood into the fallen titans of a mythological world in language so incandescent that, in her *The Messiah of Stockholm* (which ends with the ostensible finding of the manuscript of Schulz's lost novel *The Messiah*), Cynthia Ozick compares reading him to "copulating with an angel whose wings are on fire." "We are all artists, Shlomo," says the same Schulz to one "Shlomo son of Tobias," alias Momik, at the end of the second part of *See Under: LOVE*, as the two stand looking down on Drohobycz's marketplace on the day of the Messiah's arrival, "only some of us have forgotten that, and others prefer to ignore it out of a strange fear which is not at all clear to me . . ."

"And we? The musicians and writers?" [asks Shlomo] "Ah, Shlomo, compared to real art, natural art, literature and music are nothing but ephemeral copy work, a superficial interpretive craft, not to say a poor plagiarism, lacking in imagination and talent . . ."

"If so," I asked with extreme caution in order to avoid hurting him too much, "what would you say, and how could we continue living in our old world, after a certain act we've heard about was committed, an act they attribute to a man you don't know yet, or you may have forgotten, who shot a Jew just to challenge his rival. . . ." [Shlomo is referring to Schulz's Nazi murderer, who reportedly shot him as an act of revenge against the German officer who was his artistic patron and protector.] "I told you already—" Bruno interrupted me, finning excitedly and unwilling to listen to what I had to say, —"I've already told you three times that such things are inevitable in a putrefying culture." He swam a few circles around himself, dived down, and floated up to me again, steering with his tail like a lusty sperm. "And now everyone will understand," he said, "that whoever kills another human being destroys a uniquely idiosyncratic work of art which can never be reconstructed . . . a whole mythology, an infinite Age of Genius . . ."

But why the ocean episode, why Schulz the salmon, why the long migration to the river in Scotland that he must blindly ascend to die? Although this part of *See Under: LOVE* is not easily interpreted, Momik has left us a few clues. "They're forgetting," exults Bruno about the people in the marketplace as the Messiah passes transformingly among them, leaving them "dumbfounded, as though seeing each other for the first time." "Forgetting what?" asks Shlomo anxiously. "Everything," answers Bruno, "swimming like a tiny fish" through the room.

Everything: the language they spoke, their loves, the passing moment. . . . They're turning into artists, Shlomo, great creators. . . . [This is] Creation in the fullest sense of the word. In all its splendor. Oh, Shlomo, this is the Age of Genius we've always dreamed of. . . . There's no longing for the past, only a passion for the future; there are no immortal works; there are no eternal values except for the value of creation itself, which is not a value at all but a biological drive. . . . Look at them, Shlomo [the figures in the marketplace]—they don't remember anything beyond this moment, only this moment in the world of the square is not a single chime of the church clock; it is, shall we say, a time crystal containing one experience only, which can last a year or an instant. Yes my Shlomo, they are people without memory, firsthand souls, who in order to continue to exist must re-create language and love and each coming moment anew. . . .

To which an agonized Shlomo replies, "gulping water":

"But this is so cruel, Bruno, so terribly cruel! You can't do this to people! Not everyone is made of the same—hah—original material. There are some among us who actually need an orderly framework, for law, for continu —"

Schulz the salmon, then, is Janus-faced. His assumption of fishhood represents life embraced and transcended, liberated from its constraints so that existence can merge with essence in a Sea of Infinite Plenitude; yet it also represents life regressed and fled from, reduced to a frozen principle devoid of the complexities of freedom without which there is no possibility or choice. Indeed, is this not what the mythologization of human experience, whether demonic or aspiring to the Divine, must result in? Significantly, in her own version of Schulz's *The Messiah*, Ozick writes of a Drohobycz turned into a city "wholly peopled by idols," some "plump Buddhas in lotus position, unable to walk or move," others "mammoth Easter Island heads" or "in the shape of large stone birds." It can hardly be a coincidence that two fine writers, both drawn so strongly to the work of Bruno Schulz that they felt compelled to imagine its lost conclusion, should share the same sense of the ultimate ste-

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rility implicit in its prodigal fecundity.

Perhaps, too, this is what Anshel Wasserman has in mind when he remarks to Neigel that "out of the leaven of humanity one cannot bake a miracle." Not that Wasserman knows anything about Schulz, who was read by a mere handful of Polish avant-garde writers at the time of his death. But Wasserman knows a great deal about the boundary, on which his and Momik's tales have trespassed, between myth and reality, gnosis and nomos, messianic and historical time, just as Momik himself knows that fictions are a match for barbarism only in fiction.

If this interpretation is correct, David Grossman's brilliant excursion into surrealism is also a confession of the betrayal of finite human reality that the influence of Bruno Schulz, one of the great surrealists of this century, led Grossman into. That would make *See Under: LOVE* a very complicated book indeed. (It may also help explain something about the radical reversion to the world of fact in *The Yellow Wind*.) But even if one prefers a less paradoxical reading, there is no doubt that Grossman has written the most richly imaginative novel that Hebrew fiction has seen for quite some time.

When one reflects that this book was published three scant years after the appearance of Grossman's far from compelling first volume of stories, the achievement looms even greater. True, looking back one sees portents: in the long, incantatory sentences of *The Jogger* and *The Smile of the Lamb*; in their risk-taking choice of narrators far removed from Grossman's own personal experience; in the delicate exploration of how the ruler (the Israeli soldier Uri) becomes ruled by the ruled (the Arab peasant Hilmi, a storyteller too); even in certain images, such as that of the man-fish, which occurs several times in *The Smile of the Lamb*. But these are mere hints, possibilities; they no more lead to *See Under: LOVE* than Momik's childhood leads to the tales of Wasserman. Like Momik, Grossman has reworked his past, and in doing so, transformed it.

HILLEL HALKIN is a writer and translator who lives in Israel.

Iran Amok

BY SHAUL BAKHASH

Nest of Spies: America's Journey to Disaster in Iran by Amir Taheri

(Pantheon, 314 pp., $19.95)

In the introduction to his account of relations between the United States and Iran, and of America's road to the Iran-*contra* affair, Amir Taheri writes proudly that he has made use of some 58 volumes of the documents seized, put together, and published by the students who took over the American Embassy in Tehran in 1979, and that he has cross-checked this important material through some 150 "personal interviews" with individuals involved in American-Iranian relations over four decades. Taheri has also examined, he says, records of the Iranian foreign ministry and the U.S. Congress.

Taheri's argument can be stated succinctly. It is that the American relationship with Iran began in the early years of World War II with high hopes on the Iranian side and much goodwill on the American, only to end in "disaster" with the Islamic revolution of 1979. It is Taheri's view that the seeds of this revolution were sown by the Shah, "with support from six American presidents." His focus is less on the Shah's shortcomings, though, than on America's. He believes that the United States, thanks to its policies since the 1960s in Iran and elsewhere, dissipated the considerable sympathy it enjoyed among the Iranian middle classes. It came to be seen as a supporter of corrupt and dictatorial regimes.

In Iran, writes Taheri, the United States abandoned its early concern for the improvement of the economic life of the people and its early interest in widening political participation, and came to be concerned primarily with internal stability. Washington focused exclusively on relations with the person of the Shah. Nixon and Kissinger fed the monarch's visions of grandeur, and encouraged him to act not just as the Shah of Iran but "as if he were the ruler of the world." The Nixon-Kissinger decision in 1972 to give the Shah carte blanche on arms purchases amounted to a surrender of any

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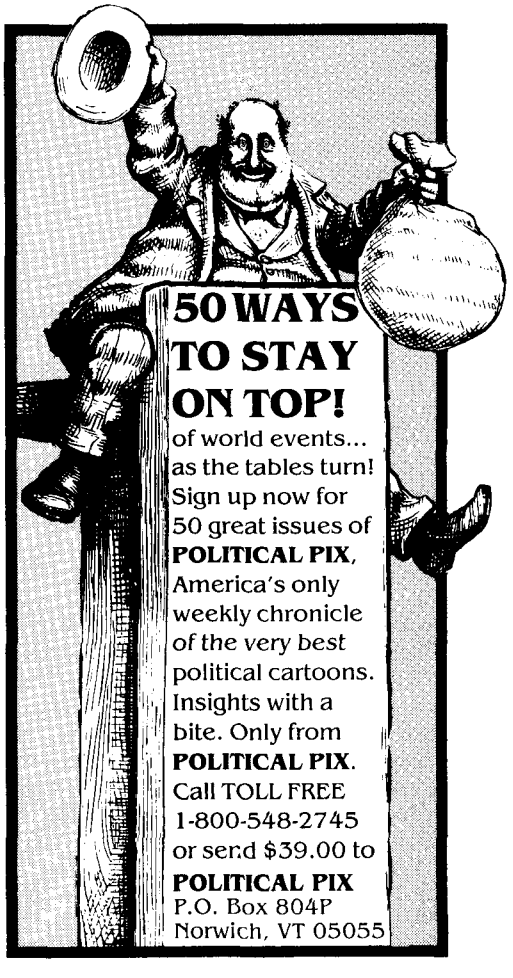

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American say in the arming of Iran: "The Iranian monarch was determined to hang himself and his American friends obliged by selling him the rope."

At the same time, Taheri argues in another part of his book, American diplomats in Iran in the '60s and '70s were generally not up to scratch. Few knew Persian or mixed with the people. The ambassadors, with one or two exceptions, were second-rate. The Americans failed to remark upon the gathering storm clouds. They remained concerned with the middle-class nationalist opposition, while the real revolutionaries were the clerics and the Marxists. In contrast to the devoted missionaries and aid experts of the early postwar period, moreover, the thousands of Americans who came to Iran in the wake of the oil revenue explosion in 1973 tended to include "a disturbingly large number of unscrupulous merchants, fixers, influence peddlers, layabouts, adventurers, smugglers of antiques and of drugs, and at times even characters linked with the American Mafia." Thus the Americans were blamed, in Iran, for high rents and alien ways.

But Taheri cannot quite decide whether the final American "disaster" in Iran was due to a lack of intelligence or to the failure to put intelligence to good use; whether Washington knew from embassy reporting "what it needed to know for a proper understanding of Iran," or was advised by the diplomats at its embassy primarily about political trivialities and gossip; whether embassy contacts among Iranians were wide, or limited to a narrow elite; whether the embassy had an understanding of the gravity of the problems engendered by the Shah's manner of rule, or was so obsessively concerned with economic rather than political development that its assumptions were hopelessly flawed. Taheri tends now to one side, now to the other, of all these arguments.

His fuzziness is evident elsewhere in the book, too. Clearly Taheri wishes that America had been much more actively involved in the promotion of political liberalization in Iran. And yet he writes that for the Americans to press the Shah to act against himself, to play the role of a liberal president, was futile. At times Taheri suggests that the rising middle class was the key to political success in Iran, and takes Americans to task for failing to address the desire of this growing constituency for democratization. But he also argues that many Iranologists were wrong to think that "the main source of tension" in Iran was the desire of the middle class for freedom, since the major revolutionary forces were, after all, the clerics and the Leninists. (He is also capable of generalizations of breathtaking sweep and inaccuracy: for example, that "in 1978 the Iranian economy was far more collectivized than that of, say, Poland or Hungary.")

If all this sounds a little familiar, it is. Taheri's critique of American policy in Iran has become, by now, the conventional view. The story of this relationship has been told with greater authority by Barry Rubin, R. K. Ramazani, Richard Cottam, Gary Sick, and James Bill. Taheri's account, especially for the period 1900-51, appears to depend rather heavily, in fact, on Rubin's *Paved with Good Intentions: The American Experience and Iran*, without proper acknowledgment. Quotations in Rubin's book reappear here, but they are ascribed by Taheri to his ubiquitous "personal" or "private" sources.

The banality of Taheri's conclusions, however, is not the most troubling aspect of his book. It might have been compensated for by the originality of his research. For *Nest of Spies* makes great claims for its own scholarship. The book bears, quite ostentatiously, all the trappings of learning: footnotes, source and page citations, dates of interviews, and so on. But all this academic apparatus turns out to be mostly window dressing, or worse. Taheri's scholarship is sloppy and unreliable. The authorities he cites are often specious. His interpretations of the documents are often egregiously inaccurate.

For the period after 1975, Taheri is on his own, as it were, with the documentary sources. He has consulted the files of the American Embassy seized in Tehran and published by Iranians. He draws on the Tower Commission report on the Iran-*contra* affair. He cites Persian sources. And he presents excerpts from dozens of interviews he says he conducted, on the evidence of which Taheri has enjoyed the confidence of important members of the Iranian exile community, of officials in European and Arab countries, of arms dealers, of various "intelligence sources," and not least, of important aides of Khomeini and Iranian officials. Taheri would have us believe that he can count among his Iranian informants a relative of the Ayatollah and members of his personal secretariat, sources close to the Iranian Cabinet, an adviser to Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the speaker of the Majlis and Rafsanjani's personal emissary to Washington and London, and sources at the Iranian foreign ministry. He claims to have been privy to discussions at closed meetings between Khomeini and high-ranking Iranian officials and clerics, and even to a private telephone conversation between Rafsanjani and his son Mohsen, who negotiated in 1986 with Oliver North and other representatives of the Reagan administration.

Immediately a difficulty presents itself. It is that the majority of Taheri's informants are either unnamed or conveniently dead. Some of these informants are unusually vague: they are identified, for example, as "military sources in Tehran," "political sources in Tehran," or "private sources in Tehran." In short, we must take Taheri at his word, we must trust his accuracy about these interviews. We must also take him at his word regarding the Persian sources he cites. Several of these are reports only obscurely identified and of uncertain provenance; others are books of whose existence it is difficult to find independent confirmation. "Figures supplied by the Information Ministry in Tehran in 1973," "confidential report prepared for the Ministry of Religious Endowments in Tehran, 1978," "a confidential study made by the Ministry of Islamic Guidance and leaked to opposition groups in Europe," and such equally vague and uncheckable materials are typical of Taheri's citations.

Still, there are places where Taheri's sources can be checked, and the results inspire precious little confidence in his scholarship or his reliability. For a start, Taheri repeatedly refers us to books where the information he cites simply does not exist. Thus, he cites volume four of a study by Ali Davani, *Nehzat-e Ruhaniyyun-e Iran* (The Clerical Movement in Iran), as his source for an alleged plot by Khomeini's followers to assassinate Nixon in 1972 during his visit to Iran. But he gets the name of the book wrong; and volume four, as its subtitle clearly indicates, covers only the period up to 1964; and there is nothing in the pages he cites from this volume even remotely connected with an assassination plot against Nixon.

Writing of the assassination of the Iranian prime minister Ali Razm-Ara in 1951, Taheri notes that "some Iranians saw in Razm-Ara's death a warning from the Anglo-Iranian [Oil Company] that attempts at playing the American card would simply not be tolerated." A footnote gives as the source for this assertion an entire book, *Hugug-Begiran Englis dar Iran* (England's Agents in Iran). This time Taheri gets the name of the author wrong. The book is by Ismail Ra'in, not Mahmoud Mahmoud. And the book does not mention the Razm-Ara assassination at all, let alone express an opinion as to its significance.

Again, in writing of the fingerpointing that followed the failed military coup by followers of former Prime Minister Shapour Bakhtiar in 1980, Taheri remarks that "Bakhtiar, however, claimed that he

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had masterminded the plot and that it failed because of 'treason by some elements.' " His footnote refers us to Bakhtiar's memoir, *Ma Fidelité*, but that book makes no mention of the plot, and the quoted words do not appear in the text.

Taheri cites an editorial in the newspaper *Sobh-e Azadegan* regarding the visit to Tehran in 1980 of former U.N. Secretary General Kurt Waldheim, but no such editorial appears in that issue of that newspaper. In another footnote in the same chapter, he cites the issue of June 6, 1980, of *Jomhuri Islami* for a quotation from Ayatollah Beheshti, who is supposed to have said that "it is not our duty to get Carter re-elected." Taheri seems to have overlooked the fact that June 6, 1980, was a Friday, a religious holiday, when the newspaper was not published at all. Later he cites an editorial from the newspaper *Engelab-e Islami* of March 12, 1980, but such an editorial does not appear in that issue of the newspaper. An article supposedly written by a former National Security Council staff member in the *Washington Post* of June 2, 1986, does not appear in that issue. Many more examples of Taheri's shoddiness could be adduced.

Taheri draws heavily on the American Embassy documents. Those documents need to be used, however, with extraordinary care. They constitute an extremely incomplete record of American dealings with Iran. Only part of the embassy archives survived shredding and pulverization; and the Iranian students who took over the embassy were selective, obviously, in what they chose to publish.

Still, the embassy documents remain an important source of information in three areas: American assessments of the regime in Iran in the 1960s and 1970s; embassy contacts with members of the Iranian government and opposition in 1978, in the dying days of the Pahlavi dynasty; and American reporting on the tumultuous early months of the Islamic Republic. Except for James Bill's recent *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations*, these documents have not been extensively employed.

Taheri uses them in part to buttress his criticism of American policy. He draws on the documents to detail the often amusing but largely irrelevant cast of characters who called at the embassy in the revolutionary year of 1978 with their panaceas for the crisis. He makes the point (by now widely accepted) that the United States, like virtually everyone else, fundamentally misjudged the nature of the revolutionary movement, and the balance of forces within the coalition led by Khomeini.

Taheri's version of this common view, however, is hurried and slapdash. More to the point, his use of the documents is again remarkably unreliable. Often the documents cannot be found in the volumes to which he attributes them. Out of sheer carelessness, or a need to lend to his assertions a specious authority, or a perverse determination to distort the evidence, Taheri repeatedly reads things into the documents that are simply not there.

For example, Taheri writes that Sadeq Ghotbzadeh, one of the opposition activists living in the United States, met with Attorney General Robert Kennedy in 1961, and "Bobby Kennedy was apparently moved by Ghotbzadeh's account of how bad things were in Iran and how the United States could, by a mere change of tactics, achieve dramatic improvements." Taheri refers us to pages 132 and 329 in volume 18 of the embassy documents, but volume 18 has no page 329. There is an account, on pages 130-32, of a meeting between Ghotbzadeh and a State Department official in 1977, when Kennedy was long dead. On the same page Taheri writes that "the Mossadeqists virtually saw themselves as the Iranian representatives of the U.S. Democratic Party and accused the Shah of having financed Richard Nixon's campaign against Kennedy in 1960." But the citation from the embassy documents

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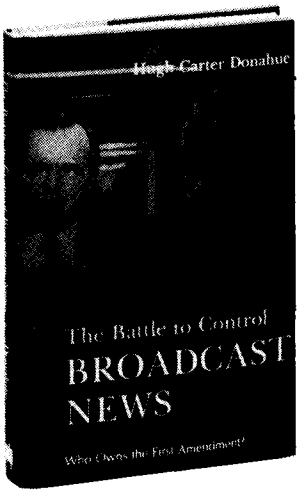

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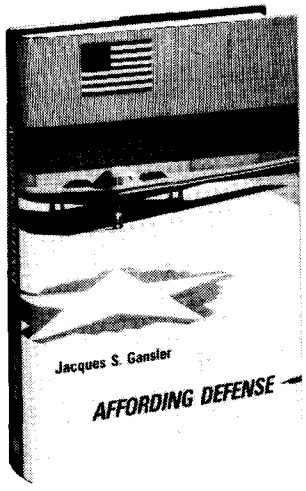

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(vol. 18, p. 93) isn't remotely connected with either of these assertions.

There's more. Taheri tells us that in 1962 the CIA recruited Mansur Rafizadeh, an Iranian who later worked for SAVAK, but the document he cites from the embassy files (vol. 23, p. 180) merely reports a meeting between an American Embassy political officer and Rafizadeh, without a mention of his recruitment as a CIA agent. Taheri writes that "curbing oil prices was one of the basic objectives of U.S. policy in Iran as set out in several State Department papers between 1973 and 1976," but his reference (vol. 17, p. 22) does not check out; the entire volume is devoted to biographies of various Iranians. Taheri recounts remarks made by the American Embassy political counsellor, George Lambrakis, to Rahmatollah Moghadam-Maraghe'i, a member of the Iranian opposition, in October 1978, and adds that "these remarks were taken to mean that Carter had ordered the Shah to organize a general election, in which his opponents would win a majority, and then abdicate in favor of his son." But there is absolutely nothing in the document that he cites (vol. 23, pp. 111-12) to suggest Moghadam had drawn such a conclusion, or that Lambrakis thought he had. (On the contrary, Lambrakis notes that "[Moghadam] rejected my argument that the Shah is preparing the succession of his son; the Shah is far too selfish to worry about his son, Moghadam said.")

Taheri has trouble transcribing even the simplest information. He cites a *Los Angeles Times* story relating to arms sales to Iran and citing statements made by one Reza Askari (Mehdi Bahremani) at an earlier press conference, and manages to get wrong both the date of Bahremani's press conference and the amount in commissions that Bahremani said he was ready to repay. And he seems unable to read even himself correctly. He asserts that Shapour Bakhtiar, the former Iranian prime minister, intended to set up a provisional government in the southwest Iranian city of Ahwaz on the heels of the Iraqi invasion of Iran in September 1980. In addition to the usual unnamed sources, he cites as evidence for this assertion an article that appeared in the *Sunday Times* of London on October 12, 1980. Nowhere does he mention that the article to which he refers was written by him. And nowhere in the article is an intention by Bakhtiar to establish a provisional government mentioned!

And so it goes, from page to page in this sorry book. But it is not simply Taheri's citations that are so often wrong. His interpretations of the sources are also frequently fanciful. Thus Taheri reports on the visit to the embassy of George Nathanson, an American businessman who "claimed to represent General Hossein Fardoust, who ostensibly demanded American support for a plan to save Iran by putting the Shah's son on the throne." In fact, the Fardoust reference is not in the document Taheri cites, but in another one; and there is no mention in either document of putting the Shah's son on the throne. Taheri writes that "Karim Sanjabi, the old Mossadeqist leader, also had a magic recipe: Washington should help him become prime minister." But in the document that he adduces to support this assertion—a report on a conversation between Sanjabi and an embassy official—Sanjabi makes no such suggestion and the embassy officer does not interpret his remarks in this sense at all.

Nest of Spies includes some interesting material on attempts by various Iranian exile groups to organize the overthrow of Khomeini, and on funding for these groups by the CIA, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and other governments. Some of what Taheri relates on this subject is, no doubt, based on fact; some is of doubtful accuracy; much is not supported by evidence. On the basis of the Tower Commission report, Taheri does succeed in stringing together a decent account of the Iran-*contra* affair, though here, too, drawing only on a single-volume report, he gets many of his citations wrong. He describes Manucher Ghorbanifar, the Iranian arms merchant, as an "adventurer" with "a superactive imagination," but he seems to accept Ghorbanifar's version of the affair at face value and cites him frequently as a source of information. He has the usual things to say about the Iran-*contra* affair as a rogues' operation, about the dangers of relying on covert operations rather than on regular diplomatic channels, about American misreadings of Khomeini's Iran. But having waded through 260 pages of Taheri's indifferent scholarship, the reader may be excused for being less than eager to entertain Taheri's conclusions.

There are obvious pitfalls to the writing of contemporary history. The documentation is often inadequate, and not enough time has passed for a genuinely historical perspective to form. The Iranian revolution is only a decade old. New revelations about the Iran-*contra* affair are still the stuff of headlines. But these difficult methodological circumstances do not amount to a scholar's excuse. We are not completely in the dark.

Certain aspects of the relationship between Iran and the United States *are* well-documented, especially on the American side. The fortuitous publication of portions of the Tehran embassy archives, material revealed in the course of the Iran-*contra* hearings, and material obtained by researchers through the Freedom of Information Act have helped to clarify parts of the story. Since the Iranian revolution, moreover, several of the important figures, on the Iranian and the American side, have published memoirs. And several solid studies on the subject have already appeared. A new book on the subject might be expected to show some knowledge of this growing literature. Taheri's does not. And it might be expected to reflect a scrupulous examination of the sources, and of the available documentary evidence. Not *Nest of Spies*. It is the sort of book that gives contemporary history a bad name.

SHAUL BAKHASH, Clarence Robinson Professor of History at George Mason University, is currently a fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

The Word and the Flesh

BY D. J. ENRIGHT

In and Out by Daryl Hine

(Knopf, 284 pp., $19.95)

In these confessions, spiritual and sexual, the ebullience and even comicality of the erotic element help to preserve a decency rarely found in literary dealings with the subject, whatever their bias. Yet the ins and outs of theology can be more interesting (at any rate to read about) than those of sexuality; and Daryl Hine makes a gay science of them, in the earlier sense of the adjective. Agnostic, Protestantly reared, the narrator is drawn to the Catholic faith after—*post hoc* if not *propter* as well—his friend Mark has been cheerfully seduced by a woman.

The narrator of this lightly epic poem

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is characteristically acute and amusing on the astonishment felt by cradle Catholics that outsiders, for whom ignorance is a sort of bliss, should want to join *their* club. Daryl—for that is his name—joins the Campion Club at McGill University in Montreal, and (as it seems to his starry eyes) is greeted by the chaplain "much as a banker / might welcome one eager to open / a savings account." The satisfactions, bewilderments, resistances, and temptations of a bright young convert are depicted with laid-back learning, with an irony free of brutish cynicism and, except insofar as it is a natural trait of youth, of superciliousness. The Church comes in for satire, but the narrator is quite as ready to laugh at Daryl.

Daryl's second station on what turns out to be a circular track is Lazarus House, where he serves an apprenticeship to a radical Catholic, "a monster of goodness," ministering to waterfront vagrants and drunks. He compares the timings of a "typical B-minus Mass" in the neighboring churches:

> There were some who could get from "the altar
> of God" to the terminal Gospel
> (beginning, confusingly, "In
> the beginning . . . ") in under ten minutes,
> the verified track-record standing
> at eight, notwithstanding that sacristy
> legend, the four-minute Mass.

Besides washing dishes and bed linen, he scrubs the floorboards of Lazarus House, noting that they rival the Cross in the number of splinters they produce. However deficient in respect, he wants to work his passage to heaven.

His charity exhausted for the moment, his faith "indefinably compromised," but his hope remaining (as he puts it) "erect," Daryl moves on to the third station, Sweet Saviour Priory, a pastoral Benedictine monastery in Vermont, where he and we enjoy fascinating conversations with the Abbé Clément, sprightly Master of Novices. From "the *Dialogues* / said of St. Gregory surnamed / the Big," we learn of a nun who inadvertently swallowed the devil hidden in a lettuce and became "diabolically pregnant." While clandestinely dressing up in someone else's cope—he is a connoisseur of sensations—Daryl has the grace to acknowledge that nakedness and fasting, the luxury goods of the few, are the necessities of the many. *Cucullus non facit monachum* (the hood does not make the monk) and, as Horace and this book's opening sentence predict (and we shall later witness), though you drive nature out with a pitchfork she will always come bouncing back in.

Only the Word of God is perfect, and even that can be impaired in transit and

Richard E. Flathman

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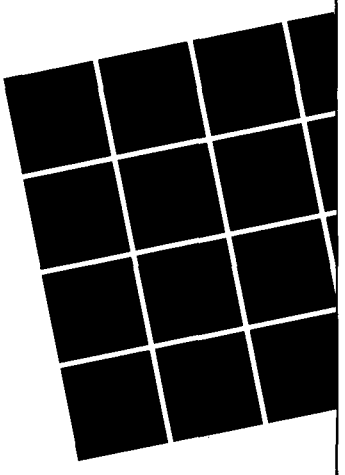

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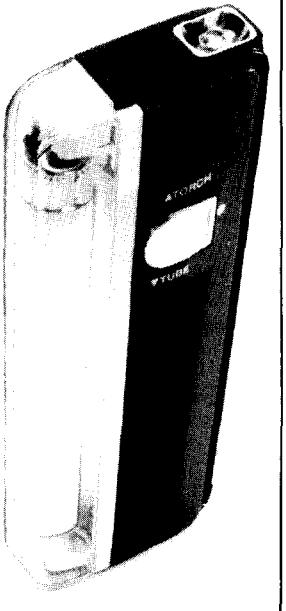

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in translation. Chattiness is to the point, but occasionally the narrator grows rather too garrulous, as he admits disarmingly at the halfway stage:

> O my pen, do you never grow weary,
> or dippy, or dizzy, or drunk
> in your headlong descent of the page,
> with the metre at sixes and sevens,
> the matter all anyhow, what
> with quodlibets, digressions and jokes?
> By the way, any word of the story?

Or the verse sags where as prose in a conventional novel it would be unexceptionable, for example in conveying necessary information—"We'd met in November,/that year I had come to McGill/as a freshman from British Columbia"—purely because we expect more (or different) from poetry. For the verse-novelist always to be writing verse as well as a novel is a lot to ask, though Hine comes very near to it (as did Vikram Seth in *The Golden Gate* three years ago, and in rhymed Pushkinian stanzas at that). On the other hand, passages that would seem intolerably overdone in prose are legitimate and engaging in verse:

> . . . beneath us the city,
> withdrawn into premature twilight,
> its windows and chimneys and roofs,
> and beyond it the sweep of the river
> whose frigid magnificence flashed
> in the westering trail of the sun
> like a scimitar fashioned of ice . . .

Schoolboy sniggering over the term "ejaculation" (an exclamatory mode of praying) is spun out, and the flesh, albeit at 18 years of age gracefully fresh, is just a little too much with us. But bubbling wit and high spirits more often uplift: faced with an analysis of Henry James's heroines in terms of repression, Daryl demurs that they seem "too complex for a complex," and, apropos of a heavy-handed Jewish Freudian now ultraorthodoxly Catholic, "Hope, and Faith, and Karate" is a nice chirpy joke between youngsters.

Among such linguistic virtuosity, rare and felicitous locutions like "inquilinous" (Latin: in the manner of a lodger) and "megillah" (Hebrew: scroll), it is a distinct shock to come upon "miniscule" at least four times, a spelling at odds with the word's roots. If not a simple misprint, "necessitites" could conceivably be dog (or God) Latin. Stumbling over "gay" and "hopefully," Daryl calls himself "a lexicographical purist." His more knowing friend observes that "hopefully gay" would describe either one of them; but that was way back in the mid-1950s.

Hine's nimbly running-on anapests (which, he footnotes, may look like free verse but are not) allow for the colloquial ("our favorite flics") as well as liturgical or scholastic Latin and other lingos, and seem to encourage unportentous self-questioning, much as did the elegiacs of Arthur Hugh Clough. Such musings as "at parting/the heart will awaken, alarmed/into life by the prospect of loss" could find a place in *Amours de Voyage*. And "The aesthetic appeal/of the Church, in America anyway,/must be agreed to be minimal" is close in tone to Clough's Victorian tourist, Claude: "Rome disappoints me much; I hardly as yet understand, but/*Rubbishy* seems the word that most exactly would suit it." Given that his period was considerably less gay, Claude could be an older, sadder, and wiser Daryl. "*Action will furnish belief*,—but will that belief be the true one?/This is the point, you know."

The final lap in Hine's round voyage of loves is titled "Astra Castra," the camp of the stars, an allusion to the colorful though not notably camp family of young Hyacinth Star. Daryl is tempted to ask "if his friends called him Hy/and his enemies Cynthia." Hyacinth is charming, Daryl is ready to be charmed. The inevitable is bound to happen and pretty promptly it does, but youthful bliss is tempered by a glimpse into the future, some 12 years ahead. The psychiatrist Dr. Popescu will fork out the homosexual component in Hyacinth's bisexual nature, Hyacinth will marry and have four children in rapid succession, and then kill himself in 1967. Mere unisexuality is hard enough. But nature, we have been told, will always come running back. (That Horace was talking about capital-N Nature vis-à-vis town life has long been forgotten.) In Daryl's case the pitchforks have so far borne more resemblance to silver spoons, and the book ends with him gazing contentedly into the dawn sky after a long night:

> . . . "Is that Venus?"
> I yawned, astronomically ignorant.
> "Isn't it queer that the morning
> and evening stars are the same?"

D. J. ENRIGHT is the author of *Fields of Vision: Essays on Literature, Language, and Television*, recently published by Oxford University Press.

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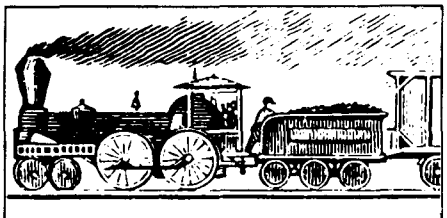

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CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 6*

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The SAT, of course, is not alone in teaching these lessons. Virtually all multiple-guess tests, including those required for a regents diploma in New York, teach the same things. Anyone who is interested in real educational reform should be working to abolish such tests.

THEODORE L. STEINBERG
Fredonia, New York

Shostakovich in London

To the editors:

Although I am not a keen enough student of Shostakovich to enter a dialogue

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with Richard Taruskin ("The Opera and the Dictator," March 20), your readers might like to know that although *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* is unavailable on audio disk, something better may exist. In 1987 the English National Opera of London mounted a production of the original 1934 version with a new English-language translation by David Pountney, who also produced the work. Although purists may look down on the English National Opera, this production was absolutely stunning. The sexual passion that so outraged Stalin was abundantly on display in the musically and physically seductive performance by Josephine Barstow, who played Katerina.

The evening I saw *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* (June 15, 1987) was one of two occasions on which the BBC videotaped the performance. Although no performance has ever, to my knowledge, turned up on American screens, a videotape presumably exists. I hope that it becomes available in the United States so that people here may experience this extraordinary, albeit controversial, work.

ROBERT C. GRAY
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Puppy Ciao

To the editors:
I get the idea—everyone should get to school at sunrise (Washington Diarist, "Hushed Puppies," April 24). Today, school begins at 5:40, tomorrow at 5:42. As for those of us who arrive at work at 8 or 9 in the morning, of course we've just gotten out of bed ten minutes beforehand, so we've missed the best few hours of the day.

I'm not quite clear on what prompts the Washington Diarist to his sclerotic and bilious meanderings, but, by all means, if drowning puppies will improve his spirits, then drown they must.

ERIC SIEGEL
New York, New York

To the editors:
Re the Washington Diarist: May I suggest Midol?

DAVID J. MANN
Crescent City, California

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TRB *continued from page 4*

The system assures that each of us may have his say. It does not guarantee that any of us will get his way.

Like much of the book, this isn't good. But it's not exactly bad, either. It's simple, pithy, and direct—no worse, certainly, than the sort of thing that turns up as filler material in *Reader's Digest*.

In *Reflections of a Public Man*, we get an awful lot of platitudinous sermonizing, some of which—about the need for humility, the importance of financial honesty, the wisdom of resisting temptation—now carries a heavy weight of sad irony. But we also learn that as a boy Wright used to compete with friends "to see who among us could sit longest on a big block of ice before jumping off with freezing butt," that his nickname was Booger Red, that his mother forbade him to swim in the local swimming hole because it was downstream from "twenty-one privies which drained fecal matter directly into the creek," and that his mischievous pals Fred Oakly and Poogie Smith tormented the preacher by hiding a malodorous dead mouse inside the pulpit. ("When I was chosen by the older boys to sneak back into the sanctuary following the service and retrieve the dead mouse from its temporary resting place, I knew at last that I'd arrived.") Speechwriters don't make up details like these. They have to come from the man himself.

Jim Wright's 35-year career in Congress has been by and large an admirable one, and until the present scandal struck he was a strong Speaker. He deserves special honor for his courageous "meddling" in Central America policy, which kept the diplomatic alternative alive long enough for President Bush to adopt it as his own. A disaster on television, he is a mesmerizing speaker in the Chautauqua-tent atmosphere of the House of Representatives, where his florid style, which evokes some 19th-century itinerant Shakespearean actor declaiming in a clapboard cow-town opera house, plays beautifully. (When the word spreads that Wright is about to speak, members rush to the chamber to listen and hoot and holler.) He doesn't talk in sound bites, he talks in great groaning-board sound feasts.

His ethics, unfortunately, are as anachronistic as his oratory. Like Lyndon Johnson, he is at once a genuine public-works populist and a user of office for private gain. But he has no reservoir of affection on which he now can draw, while the man who will succeed him as Speaker, Thomas Foley, is not only respected but loved. If John Tower had to go, it's hard to see how Jim Wright can stay. He has become the dead mouse in the pulpit.

HENDRIK HERTZBERG

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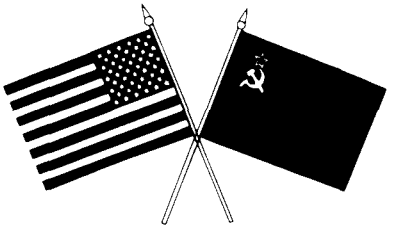

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TENANTS HARBOR DIARIST

Provincial Wisdom

THERE WERE SNOW FLURRIES ON April 23, but the sun broke through in the afternoon. Maine's winter is ending. The peepers, shrugging off the short red line on the thermometer, went crazy a few nights ago, and the twig tips of the trees are beginning to engorge; soon the forests will have the red fuzz haze that comes before the first budding green. Birds not seen for months are reappearing. Apparently they've made it for one more year without some developer cementing over their stopover feeding grounds a thousand miles to the south. No one knows if Maine will someday have a spring when the birds can't make it here, but recent events in Alaska give one pause. At Hall's store a fisherman was overheard to say anent traffic accidents in Prince William Sound, and their failure to deeply perturb the president, "Well, what do you expect, he was in the oil business." And this is Republican territory, not to mention that Maine claims Bush as a resident—or "kinda" does, as he might put it. A spokesperson for gasoline dealers has asked the locals not to boycott Exxon, but he/she needn't worry. "Mainiacs"—one of the state's cherished neologisms—are not given to displays of collective action.

MAINE MAKES MUCH OF ITS LIVing by offering people the pleasures of a still-pure outdoors. The possibility of a second year of labor shortage has vendors of natural pleasure advertising for summer youths from the interior to man and woman the motels and restaurants of the littoral. Complaints about the attendant inflation are not yet heard, though the numbers are moving toward Carteresque levels. Maybe people can't believe there can be Republican inflation. But why not? It's the one sure way George Bush has of balancing the budget, paying for the thrift industry bailout, and not raising taxes. Don't read his lips, read the numbers: at current rates, the purchasing power of each dollar of income will be cut in half in about eight years. If that's not a tax, what is?

IN AUGUSTA THESE DAYS, THE big question is whether the legislature should do what it has declined to do in the past and pass an anti-discrimination act for homosexuals. Several years ago a gay man was murdered by a couple of homophobic youths, and that gave the present drive its oomph, although why is hard to tell; it's against the law to murder anyone in Maine, regardless of the victim's sexual preferences. Even beyond that particular case, it's something of a puzzle why civil rights legislation for gays is desirable, or for that matter whether it's practical. Whom does such legislation cover? Anybody who says he or she is gay? If so, then anyone getting the sack from the job or from the apartment can get back at a boss or landlord by claiming discrimination. And if not, then how *is* gayness to be determined? Is a gay person anyone who has committed "the act"? And which act would that be? (If memory serves, some studies show a third or more of the white male population of the United States has had some kind of homosexual experience.) Does one have to have committed the act a stated minimal number of times or within so and so many months/years of filing a complaint to get protection? Is it OK to commit the act for the first time shortly before filing the complaint, or is that cheating? These technical questions aren't the only ones to be answered. The consequences of discrimination in the case of blacks, women, Hispanics, etc. are rows of doleful statistics: fewer years of education completed, lower median income, poorer housing, less health insurance, and so on. Are gay people in Maine or elsewhere less well-schooled, poorer, sicker than the straight population? I have no figures to back this up, but there appears to be an amplitude of well-heeled gays, some of whom are rumored to discriminate against straights in their hiring and rental practices. What if it should turn out that the median income of straight males is lower than that of gays? Do we repeal the discrimination law? Do we instead ban discrimination against straight men (that is, men whose number of homosexual experiences falls below the threshold of certified gayness)?

AS ELSEWHERE, DEMOCRATS IN Maine are inclined to support gay rights legislation and Republicans oppose it. Why the Democrats should take this position is baffling. True, white men of gay politics, the out-in-front gay causists, are ordinarily Democrats. But black gays—at least the lower-income majority of them—appear to be so far back in the closet that they aren't a voting or any other kind of group, but only a speculative category. And most non-public white gays one meets seem to be Republican and conservative in their attitudes. Democrats carry gay water, but do they get gay votes? When gays were in that other closet last November, was it Dukakis or Bush they pulled the lever for?

THE LOCAL MEDIA HERE ARE so provincial that they insist on claiming Maine has everything Los Angeles has, be it palm trees or crack dealers. Lately it's been crack dealers, a claim that blends nicely with the seamier currents in local gossip circles. A couple of summers ago, a group of drug smugglers moved into what they thought was an isolated vacation cottage. Not a leaf drops unnoted here, so the malefactors were watched—or do we now always say monitored?—day and night. Their everyday deeds are now legendary; from time to time you hear so and so bought an expensive this or that and paid for it with drug money. Even as local TV is alive with talk about kids and drugs, a teacher I know says it's alcohol, not cocaine, that's the problem in her high school. Meanwhile, the question of how to refer to such problems grows more complicated. Experts tell us that habitual ingestion of these substances is a disease, and we are encouraged to use a therapeutic vocabulary in talking about it. The word drunkard has been rendered almost archaic; dope fiend has been replaced by addict, a word suggestive of the clinic. These are consequential changes. When drunkards/alcoholics/substance abusers are put in jail for the sake of safety, when dope fiends/addicts/users are jailed to attack "the demand side of the problem," are we punishing the sick or the morally defective? A lot of payroll money rides on how that question is answered. More money for law enforcement or for therapy? And what of the calls to spend on "educational programs"? Do they come under the category of moral inculcation or public health indoctrination? Do youths likely to stick a hypodermic in their arms listen to their teachers—or even go to school? What works and what doesn't? None can honestly say, for everybody in the drug industry, from police officer to rehab counselor, will do better taking the gloomiest look at things. Failure is rewarded with larger budgets, success with unemployment.

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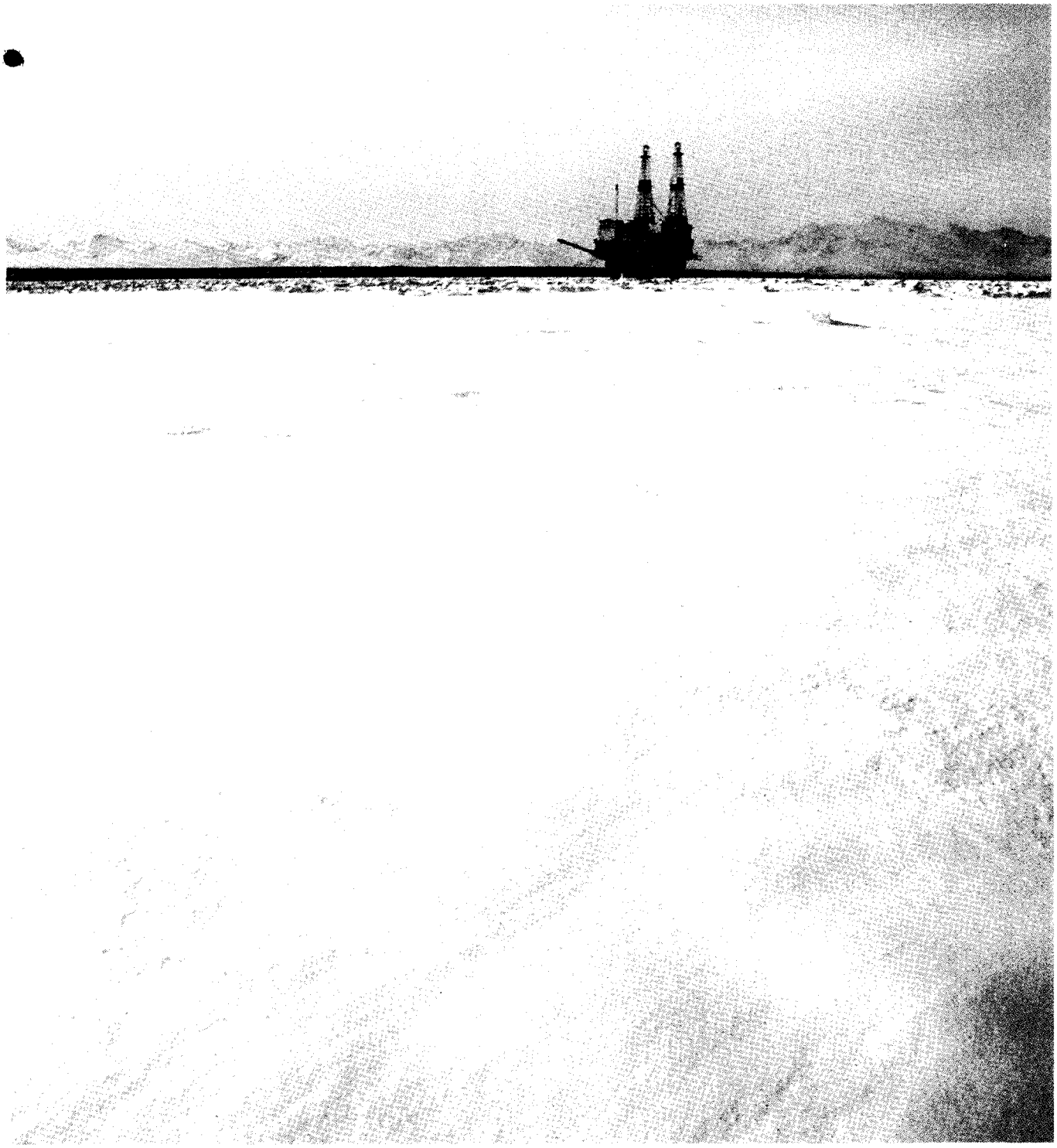

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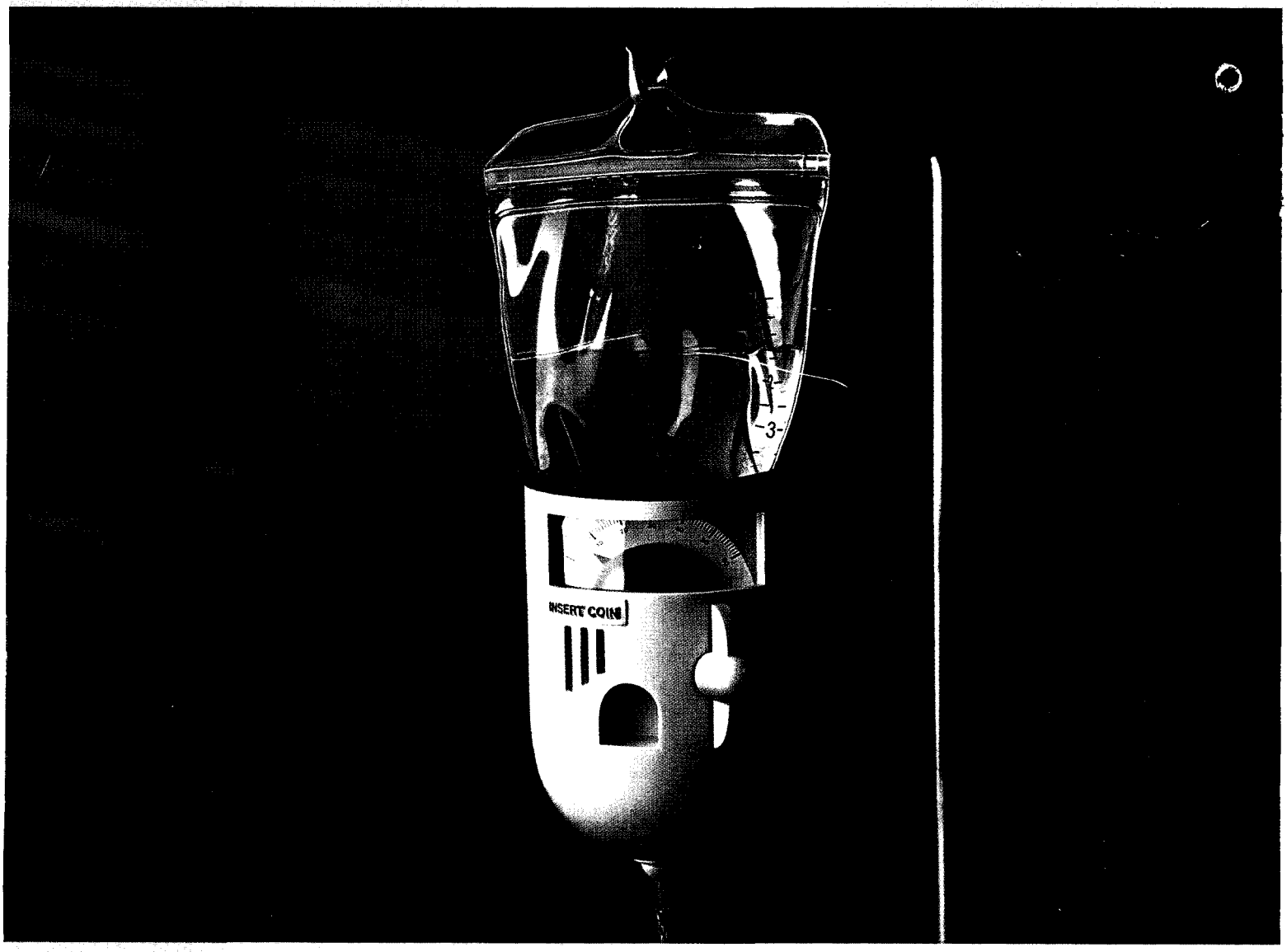

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